The Relevance and Effectiveness of Four Book of Mormon Prophets and their Teachings

David Earl Perry
Brigham Young University - Provo
THE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FOUR BOOK OF MORMON PROPHETS AND THEIR TEACHINGS

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by
David Earl Perry
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This dissertation, by David Earl Perry, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Ancient Scripture of Brigham Young University as satisfying the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Monte S. Nyman, Committee Chairman

Robert J. Matthews, Committee Member

A. Gary Anderson, Committee Member

9-13-73
Date

Monte S. Nyman, Acting Department Chairman

Typed by: Sondra and Bob Jones
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To Lehi, Nephi, Alma, and Mormon, the writer of this study desires to express deep and profound gratitude for the months and years of close companionship which they have afforded him. Their personalities and teachings were found to be singularly relevant and effective in his own life. This project provided a glimpse, choice indeed, into heaven and the lives of those who there enjoy celestial joy.

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION
Chapter 1

HOW PERTINENT WERE THE FOUR PROPHETS TO THE
PROBLEMS OF THEIR TIMES?

Vast numbers of people today question the value and relevance of religion, prophets, and "old-fashioned" scriptures in their lives. The causes of this perennial phenomenon are numerous, for indeed it is not a new situation. Religious writers throughout history have recorded their observations regarding these questioners.

One such anti-Christ, named Korihor, stated his views this way:

O ye that are bound down under a foolish and a vain hope, why do ye yoke yourselves with such foolish things? Why do ye look for a Christ? For no man can know of anything which is to come.

Behold, these things which ye call prophecies, which ye say are handed down by holy prophets, behold, they are foolish traditions of your fathers.

How do ye know of their surety? Behold, ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ.

Ye look forward and say that ye see a remission of your sins. But behold, it is the effect of a frenzied mind; and this derangement of your minds comes because of the traditions of your fathers, which lead you away into a belief of things which are not so.\(^1\)

This project sought to portray in detail some of the intricacies of the problem, analyzing its fascinating characteristics in

\(^1\)The Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Alma 30:13-16, hereafter cited by names of books. For a list of abbreviations of books therein, see p. x.
relation to the Book of Mormon.¹

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The major intent of the research phase of this dissertation was to analyze the personalities and teachings of the prophets² in the Book of Mormon to determine how effective they were in coping with the problems of their times. It likewise looked at the question of how relevant these prophets' teachings were to the then-current issues. This dual approach yielded as a by-product an investigation into the value of religion, prophets, and the scriptures in the lives of certain ancient American civilizations. Knowledge of these issues might well suggest some possible replies to the inquiries posed by men today regarding the pertinency of prophets to the present problems of the modern era.

Statement of the Problem

This research closely scrutinized two particular aspects of the religious record known as the Book of Mormon—that is, its prophets and its teachings. The intent was to discover the characteristics, problems, and teachings of the prophets, and then to analyze the effect which the prophets and their teachings had upon certain peoples of ancient America.

¹See definition of terms, p. 21. This report does not challenge the claim by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regarding the divine origin of the Book of Mormon, and presents all findings within that framework. A discussion of that claim would go beyond the range of this study.

²See definition of "prophet," p. 23.
The two MAJOR HYPOTHESES investigated were these:

1. "Did the unique personality of each representative Book of Mormon prophet cause him to be significantly qualified and effective in coping with the problems of the office in which the Lord placed him?"

2. Were the teachings of each representative Book of Mormon prophet directly relevant to his problems, assisting him to be effective in fulfilling his assignment and meeting his goals?

The results of analyzing these two hypotheses should be of interest to students of the messages and characters of the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, these findings will hopefully contribute toward an understanding and solution of the current problem indicated at the beginning--the lack of belief in the applicability of religion and scripture in our lives.

Aspects of the Major Purpose

This research proceeded on the basic premise that the Book of Mormon is a true record containing extensive data derived from two unusual religious civilizations which the Lord caused to blossom in the Americas, namely among the Jaredite and Nephite-Lamanite nations.¹ These societies flourished in the western hemisphere in a fairly isolated condition, at the same time receiving frequent instructions from the Lord through his prophets. The extent to which these men exerted a significant influence upon their civilization

¹See under definition of "Book of Mormon," p. 21.
is an important consideration which impinges upon this major purpose, for the peoples were sharply separated from the numerous eastern-hemisphere nations and their attendant religions. Through the Book of Mormon, students today have the privilege of observing these two civilizations in their enclosed environment in much the same way that a sociologist or psychologist peruses a carefully selected group of people in a laboratory situation. The availability of merely one record reporting the histories of those peoples obviously imposes a severe limitation on the amount of data accessible for study. That the Book of Mormon contains an immense storehouse of information, however, is well recognized. Much of it has never been treated, particularly by the methods of this study.

Another important aspect of the major purpose is that careful study of the Book of Mormon enables one to gain insight into the successes and failures of people whose prophets repeatedly taught them the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is well to ask if there is a significant relationship between their success and happiness, and their obedience to the teachings of the prophets. Many people have given affirmative, generalized answers to this question, but specific data would be much more useful. The procedure used in this research sought to reveal to a measurable degree how pertinent and relevant the prophets and doctrines were to the successes or failures of their generation. In this regard the study sought specific data regarding the relationship between peace, happiness, prosperity, and the flowering of society in general, on the one hand, and obedience to God's laws on the other.
Members of the Church\(^1\) believe that prophets have always taught doctrines and practices designed for the current situational needs, as well as for the eternal needs, of their particular people.\(^2\) This study investigated the uniformity of this phenomenon in the Book of Mormon, seeking to discover the problems of each representative period, the characteristics of the prophets, the doctrines which they emphasized, and how specifically each prophet and his message contributed toward solving these problems, as well as the problems of future generations as such were revealed by the Lord.

Elder Orson F. Whitney and others have advanced the belief that the Lord has called his prophets to head the Church in modern times because of certain personal characteristics which met the exigencies of their period.\(^3\) If such has been the case, it would seem logically possible that the same would hold true for prophets in all ages, including the Book of Mormon era. The evidence adduced below sheds some light on this subject.

As a final part of the major purpose pursued here, these pages endeavor to highlight the spiritual stature of the prophets in the Book of Mormon and point out some of the valuable themes of

\(^{1}\)See definition of terms, p. 23.


the book. By calling attention to the manner in which the prophets and doctrines benefited ancient Americans, this project will hopefully stimulate interest in the application of these same principles in today's situations. A further desired by-product is that this study will motivate others toward more serious doctrinal study of the Book of Mormon.

In summary, the major purpose of the research was to analyze the effectiveness and relevance of the Book of Mormon prophets--both their personalities and their teachings. The particular facets of this major purpose involved a study of the problems of the period in which a prophet lived, his personality characteristics and methods, his doctrinal themes, the successes and failures of his people, and the effectiveness of his personality and teachings in meeting the challenges and assignments of his office.

Justification and Values of This Study

The Book of Mormon seems to display the clearest and most complete view that is available today of a "gospel civilization" led by prophets. By contrast, some of the records from the times of Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham are very brief. Furthermore, the Nephites had the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ,1 whereas the majority of the Israelites from Moses until Christ had only a part of the gospel, namely, the law of Moses containing the lesser

1The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 20:9; cf. also 2 Nephi 25:23-25.
doctrines and ordinances which were revealed when the children of Israel rejected the higher laws the Lord initially offered to them. Furthermore, the Israelites were not totally isolated from Gentile influences, whereas the Jaredites and Nephites apparently were, according to the Book of Mormon. This makes the Book of Mormon an excellent source for measuring the strength of the influence of prophets on a civilization.

The findings of this research can be important and valuable for several reasons, including the following objectives pursued by the study:

To characterize the prophets in relation to their problems. A knowledge of the character and effectiveness of each prophet can aid the reader of the Book of Mormon in gaining an appreciation for that prophet, and an understanding of his significance for our day. A knowledge of the problems of his ministry and the manner in which he confronted them, can give guidance to those with similar vexations today.

An advantage of this type of approach is that it highlights each prophet, spotlighting him as a man. It looks at his period of preparation before being called, his abilities and personality, and his experiences in revelation and preaching. It also investigates what impression he made upon the people, both of his generation and

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1D&C 84:26-27; see also Joseph Smith, History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964-66), IV, 212, commonly known as and hereafter cited as DHC.
of later generations.

To classify the doctrines in relation to the prophets and their problems. Delineating the doctrines emphasized by each prophet should assist the reader in comprehending the values, purposes, and overall messages of the Book of Mormon. This study can assist the reader in observing the successive and progressive stages of gospel enlightenment among a group of saints. It also depicts graphically the teachings which the prophets repeated--major themes--and shows how these doctrines were revealed to help solve particular problems among the people. Finally, it examines the larger frame of reference for each doctrine, showing its relationship to the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written.

To identify the people's response to the prophets. To Book of Mormon asserts that the same messages which the ancient Americans received are the Lord's word to us today. Such an assertion is significant for this research, which looked at the manner in which the former inhabitants of this land responded to the words of the Lord's prophets. It examined numerous teachings regarding individual, group, and national success. In the light of the above claim, the findings of this study could have value for all people today, to whom the Book of Mormon directs its warnings and its teachings about individual salvation and national survival.

To analyze the consequences of righteousness and wickedness. A knowledge of the rewards which the ancient Americans earned for their actions in response to the teachings of the prophets is likewise
of importance to our age. Having Christ's same basic teachings in the Bible, Americans today can not expect to receive a better reward than did the Nephites and other Book of Mormon peoples if their actions are no better. Inasmuch as men everywhere are seeking success and happiness, this research can be valuable wherein it discusses the connection between obedience to God and his prophets, and success and happiness; and the relationship of wickedness and disobedience to misery and destruction.

**Delimitations**

This investigation did not extensively analyze each individual principle and its theological implications, nor every writer and prophet, but only those chosen under the criteria listed below in the section entitled "Criteria for Analyzing Data."¹

In categorizing problems, minute problems were often merged in with significant ones rather than given separate analysis.

No attempt was made to perform a post-mortem psychoanalysis of each prophet, nor to make rash suppositions about any of his characteristics, doctrines, or experiences concerning which the Book of Mormon was silent.

The quoted writings of Biblical prophets were treated briefly and in general terms when they occurred in the text of a prophet's writings. This was true especially in the lengthy passages of Isaiah included by Nephi (1 Nephi 20-21; 2 Nephi 12-24).

¹See p. 11.
RESEARCH DESIGN

On a technical level, four considerations served to outline the research procedures: (1) the sources of data, (2) the means or criteria for selecting data, (3) the criteria for relevance of teachings, and (4) the method of analysis.

Sources of Data

The primary source of data was the Book of Mormon, it being the major object under consideration. A Complete Concordance of the Book of Mormon by George Reynolds served as an invaluable key to unlocking the book.

Pertinent critical comments, interpretations, and doctrines from the other three of the standard works\(^1\) of the Church and from modern prophets, seers, and revelators\(^2\) assisted in properly interpreting and understanding the data from the Book of Mormon. Comments from other General Authorities\(^3\) and from Latter-day Saint scholars were also of value in this regard.

Criteria for Analyzing Data

In the research phase of this study, two criteria determined which prophets and which teachings of the Book of Mormon were to be considered:

1. For each prophet selected, a significant amount of information was needed on both his life and teachings. Four prophets

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\(^1\)See definition of "Latter-day Scriptures," p. 27.
\(^2\)See definitions, p. 23.  \(^3\)See definitions, p. 24.
were chosen for analysis, each one being a major representative from his respective era. Since their writings constituted a large portion of the Book of Mormon, such a sample was judged to be adequate in determining the answers to the major hypotheses under examination.

The prophets chosen for the study represented four unique periods of Nephite history: Lehi--the reign of a patriarch; Nephi--the reign of the kings; Alma the younger--the reign of the judges; and Mormon--the reign of the disciples. This categorizing thus provided for a broadly-based analysis of the effectiveness of prophets in their different roles.

2. Secondly, the teachings to be considered needed to be those which had been clearly and strongly emphasized in one or more verses, and which were directed to an ancient American audience.¹

Some further criteria were necessary to analyze the information systematically. Because much of the book is Mormon's abridgment of the large plates of Nephi,² it is difficult to ascertain much of the original writers' character and teachings with any high degree of certainty in many cases. To aid in this differentiation,

¹Inasmuch as it was neither the original writers, nor yet Joseph Smith, but Orson Pratt who (in 1879) divided the text into verses, the selection of "one verse" as the standard of judgment for this investigation was purely arbitrary. Even short verses might, of course, contain very seminal thoughts with far-reaching effects. During the research phase of this project the exercise of prudence was necessary in determining whether a single verse was actually lending significant emphasis, or, on the other hand, whether two or three verses combined were not producing much emphatic impact.

²³ Nephi 5:8-11; Words of Mormon 1-5; Mormon 6:6.
distinctions have been drawn between direct quotations and editorial paraphrasing throughout the discussion of the life of Alma as edited by Mormon. The same was true for Nephi's rendering of the life and teachings of Lehi, and for some of Nephi's teachings as cited later by Jacob. A third differentiation used in describing the emphasized teachings of some of the prophets was lessons from history; these were teachings not stated in true abstract form, but easily deduced from the narration of events.

Comments by an editor about a prophet's activities fit in the category of the first major hypothesis (dealing with personality). Direct quotations from a prophet's original words, the words of heavenly beings to him, and indirect quotations paraphrased by an editor were the sources used for analysis of the second hypothesis (regarding teachings).

Any "doctrinal editorials" which an editor inserted in the abridged works of another were considered in the study of the editor's life and teachings.

Since the entire Book of Mormon passed through Joseph Smith's mouth in translation, it was necessary to bear in mind the premise, stated at an earlier point above, that the Lord inspired the translation, as well as the editing carried out by Nephi, Mormon, Ether, and Moroni. This suggested emphatically that it was still entirely possible to acquire an understanding of those characteristics and teachings of the prophets which the Lord deemed most significant and desirable for modern man to have. They have not been lost in the abridgment and translation processes.
A final criterion for analyzing the data gathered in this research concerned the issue of judging the relevancy of a prophet's teachings. Belief in the divine origin of the Book of Mormon automatically brings with it the corollary that its teachings are relevant. This is fine for the believer, but what does any other serious investigator have as evidence? The assumptions of faith are not demonstrable through academic means. The logical consistency and truth within a system are fully observable and acceptable only to someone who desires to enter the system. Fortunately, however, one factor in a full or complete observation is the comparison of matters outside the system, whether standing inside or outside the system itself. In terms of a study like this, such a comparison must include looking at specific problems faced by the prophets, while observing whether their teachings are relevant and adequate as judged by a standard which other observers outside the system could likewise employ.

One test of relevance would be the pragmatic approach: if a given problem was dealt with successfully, apparently the prophet's teachings were admirably suited to the situation. Unfortunately this might beg the question, for other unknown factors might have weighted the scales on the side of success.

The desire for direct application of doctrines to a current situation seems to be the issue at stake when people complain that some teaching or another is "meaningless," "not relevant," or "old-fashioned." Mortal beings want answers to their immediate time-centered problems. Answers which impinge only upon eternity
(the very existence of which looms only as a question mark in many minds) are not satisfactory to numerous people. Therefore, a better test of relevance would be to determine whether or not a given teaching touches directly upon the perceived problem at hand. If it does, it is relevant. This was the test used in the research phase of this project. After using such a test, one is then free to analyze the effectiveness of a teaching with regard to desired goals. Beyond that (and also beyond the scope of this present study) lie less determinable issues: was the problem correctly perceived by the prophet, and were his actions and teachings the most effective ones possible to solve the problem.

Method of Analysis

Three major parts constitute the analytical method employed in the reporting phase of this study, with the second and third parts being outgrowths or reflections of the first: (1) Six minor hypotheses are used as interrogation instruments. (2) The major purposes of the Book of Mormon serve as a frame of reference. (3) Finally, tables present the data on the prophets and their teachings.

Minor hypotheses as interrogation instruments. In order to test and clearly view the two major hypotheses, six minor hypotheses stated in the form of unanswered questions provide for precise inquiry into many different aspects of the prophets' problems, qualifications, teachings, successes, effects on later generations, and relationships
to the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written. Each chapter treats one prophet, chronologically analyzing each problem of his ministry in the light of the six minor hypotheses.

Two of the minor hypotheses require a brief additional explanation at this point. Hypothesis "B" includes an analysis of the language ability of the prophets. This was designed to look specifically at their language ability in terms of being practical versus abstract (theoretical), and simple versus symbolic. If symbolic, the specific images or symbols which were used are listed. Hypothesis "F" receives no discussion in the text of each chapter until the summary, and the data summary table. This is done for the reason that the data summary table is the best means of analyzing that hypothesis. A discussion of the data throughout the development of the chapters would be too fragmentary and somewhat meaningless. Also regarding that same hypothesis, which concerns the purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written, each problem faced by a prophet was judged to be fulfilling one of the eleven purposes if it spoke directly regarding that same topic. In the cases of purposes 1, 6, 8, and 9, however, lessons abstracted from historical events in the text were also considered to be impinging upon those purposes.

Some major purposes of the Book of Mormon as a frame of

1. The major and minor hypotheses questions are listed in Table 1 at the end of this chapter, p. 19.

2. These major purposes are listed in Table 2 on p. 20.
Minor hypothesis "F" deals with some of the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written, as stated by the Lord and his prophets. The two main categories of purposes appear on the title page of the Book of Mormon, with specific details in other places. These major purposes are listed in Table 2 at the end of this chapter. They serve as a special frame of reference for scrutinizing all of the teachings and prophets analyzed in this study. Inasmuch as each part of the Book of Mormon should contribute in some way to the overall purposes, it is important to determine the relative effectiveness of each prophet in fulfilling this specific part of his role.¹ The following standards were arbitrarily chosen to categorize the number of purposes fulfilled by the text of a given problem: "few" = up to 3; "many" = up to 6; "very many" = 7 on up to 11.

Comparison tables on prophets, problems, and teachings. As a means of displaying the results as clearly as possible, the findings regarding all six minor hypotheses appear in the form of tables at the end of the chapters treating the prophets. The tables show the prophets and their teachings in relation to their problems, pointing out trends, repeated themes and characteristics, and factors unique to a given situation. A list of the passages written during or near the lifetime of each prophet regarding his ministry appears in

¹For a discussion of the major purposes, see Monte S. Nyman, "The Book of Mormon, Why?" The Improvement Era, LXV (July, 1962), 530; also, College of Religious Instruction, An Introduction to the Book of Mormon and Its Teachings (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1970), pp. 45-57.
Appendix A. The teachings emphasized by each prophet are presented in chronological order, with references and a note respecting the source of each teaching (quote, paraphrase, or lesson from history) in Appendixes B through E.
Table 1
Major and Minor Hypotheses

I. THE PROPHET'S PERSONALITY: Did the unique personality of each representative of Book of Mormon prophet cause him to be significantly qualified and effective in coping with the problems of the office in which the Lord placed him?

II. THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS: Were the teachings of each representative Book of Mormon prophet directly relevant to his problems, assisting him to be effective in fulfilling his assignment and meeting his goals?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A. PROBLEMS-GOALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>B. QUALIFICATIONS EXHIBITED</td>
<td>Which aspects of the prophet's personality (i.e., character, personality traits, background experiences, types of revelation received, style of action, teaching methods, language abilities, and references to other prophets) were exhibited as he confronted each problem of his ministry? (beneficial or non-beneficial?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. TEACHINGS EMPHASIZED</td>
<td>Which teachings did the prophet emphasize? (relevant or non-relevant?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. SUCCESSES-RESPONSES</td>
<td>What successes did the prophet have; how did the people respond to him and his teachings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. LATER EFFECTS</td>
<td>What recorded effects did the prophet have upon later generations in the Book of Mormon?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. MAJOR PURPOSES</td>
<td>What clear relationships did the prophet's ministry and teachings have to the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aSee Table 2 on the following page for a list of major purposes ascribed to the Book of Mormon, with their references.*
## Table 2

Some Major Purposes of the Book of Mormon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Biblical References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Christ is the Eternal God of Israel and of the Whole Earth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Christ's message to the remnants of Israel (particularly the Lamanites)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord has done for their fathers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To teach the remnant of Israel of the Lord's covenants with them, showing that they are not cast off forever.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To preach the plainness and fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Lamanites and Jews, that they may more fully believe it and be saved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Christ's message to Israel and the Gentiles</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To convince Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself to all nations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To prove to the world that the holy scriptures are true, thus fulfilling Biblical prophecy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To prove that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To show that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To try the faith of the Lord's people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. That evil may be done away, thus to eliminate Satan's power over men, and that men may be persuaded to repent and do good continually and come unto Christ for salvation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To assist in preparing a people for the millennial reign.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To testify that every man must stand before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged of his works, according to his knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Chapter 2

DEFINITION OF TERMS AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first part of this chapter lays down basic assumptions and definition of terms in order of first appearance and as used in this dissertation. The second part discusses the significant literary works which have previously been written, as touching on this subject.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

These definitions are intended to aid the reader, particularly the non-Mormon reader, gain an introductory insight into the terminology and assumptions which are reflected in this dissertation.

The Book of Mormon

Latter-day Saints declare that the Book of Mormon is a divinely inspired record of the Lord's dealings with the Nephites and Lamanites, some of the noble ancestors of the American Indians. The book itself explains that these peoples were a part of the house of Israel which was led to America by the hand of the Lord shortly after 600 B.C. In addition it preserves a brief account of still earlier inhabitants of the Americas, the Jaredites.

The Book of Mormon contains the gospel of Jesus Christ, as taught by the Lord and his prophets to those peoples. It recounts the Lord's post-resurrection visit to them and reaffirms the covenants
which He has made with the faithful of all generations.

Sometime around the year A.D. 421, Moroni, the last writer in the book, buried the metal plates on which it was inscribed. This same Moroni appeared in A.D. 1827 as a resurrected being and delivered the plates to Joseph Smith, a young man living in Palmyra, a small town on the western frontier of the state of New York. Joseph Smith, known now as "the Prophet," translated the book by the "gift and power of God"\(^1\) and published it to the world. In 1830, acting under divine direction, he took the lead in organizing The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church accepts the Book of Mormon as scripture, just as it does the Bible, for both were written by holy men of God, as directed by the Holy Ghost.\(^2\)

These inspired historians kept careful records at each stage of the cultural and religious development of their people. They included data on many aspects of life within the entire framework of the gospel. This they did under the direction of the Lord, who knew in advance that the example of these two civilizations would serve as a profitable guide for subsequent inhabitants of America, and indeed for the entire world. The Book of Mormon, an abridgment of their records, offers today a solemn warning and a witness—a warning of the fate which awaits all wicked populations which inhabit America, and a witness of the goodness of Jesus Christ to the righteous who live in accord with his gospel.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\)B. of M., title page. \(^{2}\)2 Peter 1:21; 1 Nephi 6:3-6. \(^{3}\)The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 20:9; 88:81; hereafter cited as D&C.
The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints

For brevity the religious organization known as "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" will hereafter be referred to as "the Church." Members of the Church are called "Latter-day Saints," or "Mormons" because of their belief in the Book of Mormon. The Church proclaims to the world that the original Church set up by Jesus Christ lost its divine commission of authority when apostasy crept in and the ideas of men were introduced in place of the truths of the eternal gospel. The Lord restored this authority and his true doctrines through Joseph Smith, commanding him to organize the Church anew in preparation for the Lord's glorious Second Coming. The message of the restoration is freely offered to all men, for all nations may come and share in the joys and beauties of the gospel.

Prophet

A prophet is a man called of God to communicate directly with the Lord and carry oral and written messages to the people. In addition, he must be an exemplar of Christ-like conduct. In the Book of Mormon these men were Church leaders, but for some of them the brief account refers only to a few of their inspired activities, such as preaching, serving as king, or functioning as historian and holder of the records. As used in this study, the term "prophet" generally refers to the role of Church leader.

As Elder John A. Widtsoe has explained, "A prophet is a teacher. That is the essential meaning of the word. He teaches the body of truth, the gospel, revealed by the Lord to man; and under
inspiration explains it to the understanding of the people.\(^1\) It is in this broad sense that the Book of Revelation proclaims a prophet to be one endowed with a testimony of Christ. (Rev. 19:10.) He bears witness of Christ, teaching the people concerning him and his doctrines. It is with these factors in view that this study treats those ancient Americans who taught of Christ—whether they wrote or spoke, were Church leaders, civic leaders, or common citizens called to testify of Him.

Throughout this work there are quotations from Church leaders whose words are herein esteemed to be of particular weight because of their calling as prophets. In referring to a prophet as a Church leader or executive, Latter-day Saints believe that he is a man appointed by direct revelation from God, through His Son, Jesus Christ, to guide the Church on earth. The Church declares that Joseph Smith and his successors as President of the Church are prophets just as literally as were Moses or Elijah. Those in the central administrative offices of the Church are termed General Authorities. Of these men, the Lord endows the following with the prophetic calling: the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve Apostles, and the Patriarch to the Church. The late J. Reuben Clark, Jr., one of the First Presidency, explained that:

They are sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators, which gives them a special spiritual endowment in connection with their teaching of the people. They have the right, the power, and authority to declare the mind and will of God to

his people, subject to the over-all power and authority of the President of the Church. . . . the President of the Church has a further and special spiritual endowment in this respect, for he is the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator for the whole Church.

Latter-day Saints believe that the utterances of modern prophets are authoritative and significant for the entire Church, even though they are not always voted upon by the Church membership and thus canonized as scripture.\(^2\) Local Church leaders, and also all worthy individual members, can have the gift of prophecy pertaining to the stewardship over which they preside.

The title "seer" refers to a man's calling to view the past, present, and future by means of visions and other gifts of God whenever the Lord deems it necessary to bestow them. Thus, he is one who "sees" spiritual matters literally and clearly. The Lord gives a divine instrument called the Urim and Thummim, or interpreters, to such men to aid them in this calling. The Book of Mormon explains that "a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can."\(^3\) This indicates that a seer

\(^1\) J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "Address to Seminary and Institute Faculty," Brigham Young University, July 7, 1954, cited by Roy W. Doxey, The Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1963-65), I, x.

\(^2\) D&C 68:2-4. This gave a more general application of the term "scripture" than is commonly used in the Christian world today. The passage referred particularly to certain missionaries, but the General Authorities have explained that it applies even more to the President of the Church and also to the other General Authorities. J. Reuben Clark, "Address to Seminary," cited in Doxey, II, 394-96.

\(^3\) Mosiah 8:16; see also 8:13-18, and The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Joseph Smith 2:35, hereafter cited as P. of G. P.
is extraordinarily gifted, even beyond the general prophetic calling.

Christians in general view a seer as being essentially identical with a prophet, although acknowledging from the scant Biblical evidence that "it may be that the 'office' of seer was chronologically prior to that of a prophet as an indigenous institution in Israel."¹

Elder Widtsoe concisely summarized the relationship of the term "prophet" to other similar terms:

In the course of time the word "prophet" has come to mean, perhaps chiefly, a man who receives revelations, and directions from the Lord. The principal business of a prophet has mistakenly been thought to foretell coming events, to utter prophecies, which is only one of the several prophetic functions.

In summary: A prophet is a teacher of known truth; a seer is a perceiver of hidden truth, a revelator is a bearer of new truth. In the widest sense, the one most commonly used, the title, prophet, includes the other titles and makes of the prophet, a teacher, perceiver, and bearer of truth.²

Personality

Major hypothesis number one uses the term "personality" substantially as defined in Webster's Third New International Dictionary. The sum total of a man's nature is his personality, including all of the following:

His character is the aggregate of his desires, virtues, and vices. His personality traits are the visible mannerisms which communicate through space to another individual. Background experiences

²Widtsoe, pp. 257-58; see also Alma 5:46-47.
include both his ancestry and personal activities, but also the environmental elements of civilization heritage and religious traditions. Abilities encompass talents, training, gifts from the Lord, facility with a language, etc. Finally, his methods are the means employed to accomplish his role as a prophet, including manner and content of preaching, spiritual communion with the Lord, writing, civic enterprises, etc.

Teaching

As used herein, a teaching is a principle of truth, a correct perception of reality, revealed from God through his servants, which the Book of Mormon either stated directly as a principle of belief or practice, or taught indirectly by some other means, such as historical narrative or parable.¹

Inasmuch as some men see a lesson or message or doctrine in material which to others might appear devoid of meaning, the criterion used here to assist the researcher's subjective perception was that of length of emphasis. If an idea was clearly taught, forming the bulk of one verse, or more than one verse, the prophet had evidently chosen to convey that message with emphasis.

Latter-day Scriptures

The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price are the latter-day scriptures accepted by the Church, meaning that the Lord brought them forth in recent times. The Church

¹D&C 93:24.
holds these to be divinely inspired writings, equal in authority with the Bible. These three, with the Bible, are what constitute the "standard works" of the Church.

**Inspiration and Revelation**

Inspiration and revelation are synonymous in a broad sense. Minor hypothesis "B", regarding "types of revelation," required that these terms be properly defined. They both refer to the communication of God with man. Inspiration, however, connotes primarily the less powerful and vivid experiences, such as hearing the whisperings of the Holy Spirit in one's mind, a feeling or premonition, intuition, flashes of perception of truth, etc.

"Revelation" is a generic term covering the full range of divine communication, including the lower forms of inspiration. Specifically, the term "revelation" usually connotes the higher forms of communication: receiving specific information to commit to written scriptural form, seeing angels, audibly hearing the voice of the Lord, seeing visions of heaven and other things, and receiving personal visitations (theophanies) from members of the Godhead.¹

Unlike many in Christendom, Latter-day Saints believe that

¹Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine (2d ed.; Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 383. Bankhead's study further indicated that Latter-day Saint usage of the terms differentiates revelation as that communication received by worthy members of the Church through the Holy Ghost. Inspiration, he stated, is the light and knowledge given to the world in general via the light of Christ. Reid E. Bankhead, "A Study of the Meaning of the Terms Inspiration and Revelation as Used in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1949), Abstract.
the Lord speaks directly to his prophets today by means of virtually every method of revelation mentioned above. He does not merely help or inspire the prophets to crystallize that which they have been brooding over for years, as some would have it; nor does He inspire men in such a way that "... the subject has no consciousness of being guided or inspired." Revelation represents the impinging of the Divine Nature upon the soul of a man, communicating in clearest terms a consciousness of truth or reality.

Continual Revelation

Continual revelation is the principle whereby the Lord, through his prophets, constantly directs his Church on earth, helping His children in both their current and their eternal problems, and adding "line upon line" to their knowledge as they prove worthy.

Elder Widtsoe has explained that there are three basic categories of revelation: those revelations to the prophets concerning the organization and basic doctrine of the Church, those given to the prophets dealing with the problems which daily confront the Church, and those personal revelations given to each faithful member for his own daily guidance.

An understanding of at least two aspects of this principle

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4 Widtsoe, pp. 100-102.
is essential to the comprehension of a study such as this. First, the Church teaches that there is always a need for continual revelation.¹ The historical development or revelation of doctrine in the Lord's Church is quite different from the manner generally described by Christian scholars and clergy.² The Lord revealed the fullness of his gospel to Adam,³ but succeeding generations have been worthy of a knowledge of this plan in varying degrees of fullness. From Adam's time on, the Savior has sent his prophets among men, revealing anew certain principles as the people needed them or were ready for them.⁴ One should constantly bear in mind, however, the antiquity of the full gospel plan.⁵

Following the ministry of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, the people again proved unworthy of the full gospel. Even though the need still existed, not again until Joseph Smith's time did the Lord deem it wise to risk having his Church and prophets on the earth once more, leading them through the principle of continual revelation


²Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine (Salt Lake City, 1966), p. 36.


It is this principle which serves as the rock-solid foundation for
the Church; Christ himself is the Rock and from Him come the reve-
lations to guide His Church.¹

As a second aspect of this principle, the Church teaches
that continual revelation provides solutions for current problems, as
well as facilitating man's eternal salvation. One should note that
"continual" does not imply that ceaseless or uninterrupted or hourly
revelation is given during each era.² During Book of Mormon times
the prophets received revelations as needed—counsel to answer their
current needs, and eternal principles to serve as a foundation,
both for current policies and for the eternal salvation of the people.
These eternal principles of the gospel were the same ones revealed to
Adam, but the policies pertained to their present situations.

A correct understanding of continual revelation is one of
the fundamentals necessary to a deep insight into the structure of
the Book of Mormon. Latter-day Saints believe that continual
revelation is the operative instrument in the giving of all scrip-
ture, and indeed in all of the Lord's dealings with men.³

The Lord labors with his children at their various levels of
progression, suiting his revelations to their needs. Changing times

¹Matthew 16:13-19; Ephesians 2:19-22; 3 Nephi 11:37-41;
P. of G. P., Moses 7:53.

²"Continuous" would more strongly suggest "constant, uninterrupted." "'Continual' is somewhat more common than 'continuous' in
describing intermittent action, but both words are well established
and satisfactory in this sense."—Webster's Third New International

³Talmage, p. 303; Cannon, pp. 328, 329-30.
and new groups of people require new policies and leaders to solve their problems. It is a fundamental belief of the Church, however, that such policies must be based upon eternal truths, not merely upon situational ethics, in order to accomplish permanently constructive objectives. Particularly, the policies should be ones applicable to the existing needs, not merely extracted from revelations which pertained only to the needs of earlier times. One should remember that there are basic eternal truths underlying even the most unprepossessing revelations on current problems. The Lord uses these as a means of instruction, just as He does His doctrinal expositions.

In summary, the principle of continual revelation is the Lord's means of sending the correct directions to His prophets so that they can help His children out of their present as well as eternal predicaments. The gospel plan is the solution, the Church teaches, to all of the world's problems; but new methods of applying that solution are necessary to cope with current crises. In this connection, the purpose of this study was to find out how effective the prophets and doctrines of the Book of Mormon were in handling the current problems existing among the ancient inhabitants of America.

Jews and Gentiles

The last minor hypothesis (treating the major purposes of the Book of Mormon) refers to the terms "covenant," "Jews," and

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1Widtsoe, p. 100. 2Cannon, pp. 323-24.
3Joseph F. Smith, "Editors' Table," The Improvement Era, XX (June, 1917), 743; Joseph Fielding Smith, "Counsel to the Saints and to the World," The Ensign of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, II (July 1972), 27.
"Gentiles." To comprehend the meaning behind the categorization involved in "Jews" and "Gentiles," one must understand the fact that a major distinction has always existed between the Lord's chosen or covenant people (those who choose to obey the laws of His Church and kingdom), and the balance of mankind.

Throughout time the group known as the Lord's covenant people has varied in number and location. The main blood line since Noah has been through Shem, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). With Abraham the Lord made substantially the same "covenant" which had pertained to all patriarchs since Adam, and which obtains yet today.¹ The fullness of that gospel covenant finds expression in the Book of Mormon and other latter-day scriptures, as well as in the Bible.

Following the division of the tribes of Israel into two political nations and the disappearance of the northern tribes, the house of Judah and the other Israelites abiding therein remained for a time as the only group which adhered as a body to the Lord's ways and His covenant. During that period "Israelite" became synonymous with "Jew," for Judah predominated.

From this point developed the common usage of the term "Jew" in sharp contrast to "Gentile." Even proselytes to the Jewish religion were not considered Jews as strongly as were those who inherited their nationality by birth.²

Mixed in with Judah were some individuals from other tribes of the house of Israel.¹ Lehi, who was one of these, stemmed from the tribe of Mannaseh but politically was part of the nation of Judah. Lehi's posterity, and the Mulekites who merged with them,² are a portion of the "remnant of Israel" of whom Isaiah and other prophets spoke, saying that they and the rest of Israel would be gathered in the latter days.³

Each of the above successive sub-divisions of Noah's posterity has spoken of itself as being distinguished from "the Gentiles"—all other men. One may, however, politically be a Gentile or a Jew, depending upon the land of residence, and yet be of the opposite blood line. (e.g., Paul the Apostle, Joseph Smith, etc.)

The gathering of Israel in the latter days has brought forth many descendants of the lost tribe of Ephraim from among the nations. To those of this Israelitish blood line are being added, by adoption into the covenant (conversion to the Church), many who are Gentiles by lineage.

Paul indicated that true believers, whether of Israelitish


²Omni 15-19; Mosiah 25:2; Helaman 8:21; 6:10.

blood or not, constitute the real Jews or Israelites. Such is still true today. This points out why it is common for Church members to refer to all nonmembers (including Jews) as Gentiles.

An understanding of the foregoing is essential to a clear view of many statements in the Book of Mormon. There, one repeatedly finds reference to Gentiles and Jews, with the latter also broadly including the Nephites and Lamanites, whose ancestors left Jerusalem for America.

In summary, one finds in the Book of Mormon three characteristics which might designate someone as an Israelite (Jew), as a Gentile, or as both:

1. Blood lineage
2. Conversion, leading to adoption into the covenant people
3. Political, national affiliation.

Satan and the Millennial Reign of Christ

Points 9 and 10 of the last minor hypothesis (see p. 20) touch on the terms "Satan" and "millennial reign." As the two are diametrically opposed, they may easily be defined by contrast.

Latter-day Saints believe that Satan is a real personage of spirit. He and his hosts now occupy the earth conjointly with mankind. Having rebelled against God in the council in heaven, Satan was cast

1 Romans 2:28-29; 9:6-8. 2 McConkie, p. 311.
down upon the earth. Here, he has sought to perpetuate his plan of force, which was rejected in heaven, but has added to it everything evilly antithetical to the eternal welfare of man. His major objective is to cause men to become as miserable as he is himself, and to drag them down to his kingdom.

According to the latter-day prophets, Jesus Christ will be coming soon to reign personally upon the earth—all in fulfillment of the word of prophets from the beginning of time. His reign of one thousand years will be marked by the binding of Satan, the cessation of evil, and the flourishing of the Kingdom of God upon the entire face of the earth. The restoration of the priesthood and the founding of the Church through Joseph Smith was the beginning of the events preparatory to Christ's coming. During the millennium, Christ's people will accomplish what Satan's forces have striven to hinder since the time of Adam: the salvation of all the righteous, both living and dead.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO THIS STUDY**

Of the numerous volumes which have been written about the Book of Mormon, careful examination showed that few specifically discussed the character and calling of the prophets. Some expounded or explained the doctrines contained in the book, but they did not analyze both

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1P. of G. P., Moses 4:1-4; Revelation 12:7-12.
2Nephi 2:27.
41 Nephi 22:15, 26.
5D&C 128:15-25.
the prophets and their doctrines in relation to the two major hypotheses of this study, treating the relevancy of the prophets' character and teachings with respect to the problems of their times.

Some good information on this subject was gained, nonetheless, from several of these books. Most of the beneficial material consisted of isolated comments on either a prophet or a doctrine. The following brief review indicates the primary purposes of the germane books available and shows the material they have which paved the way for this study.

George Q. Cannon in his explanatory volume for young people, *The Life of Nephi*, portrayed the greatness and faith of the man, making many useful observations concerning his environment and character. The book was written as a very interesting biography, but it also included ample evidence from external sources regarding geography and other such matters. Chapter nineteen was of particular value for this study, for it discussed the teachings of Nephi. The major point emphasized was the greatness and variety of Nephi's wisdom, and the clarity of his teachings regarding the Savior and the gospel.¹

Roy A. West, in a small text entitled *An Introduction to the Book of Mormon--A Religious-Literary Study*, devoted one chapter to a discussion of some of the leading messages of the Book of Mormon. The balance of the work treated a variety of aspects unrelated to this study, with the exception of a chapter on leadership and one on the

book's contributions to religious living.¹

Franklin S. Harris, Jr., in his book *The Book of Mormon--Message and Evidences*, offered three chapters of good comments concerning the application of the messages of the book to our own times. Happiness, Christ in ancient America and the doctrines of the book which aid in missionary work were three other topics which were related to this study. The balance of the volume dealt with archaeological, cultural, literary, and other problems.²

John Henry Evans wrote a work entitled *Messages and Characters of the Book of Mormon*. It presented a few valuable insights, being a general commentary which touches on a broad spectrum of topics. It did not deal directly with the subject and hypotheses of this study, although the title of the book might imply considerable overlapping. In the main it was a retelling of the story of the book, with the author's commentary.³

One of the earliest commentaries on the book, written by George Reynolds, is entitled *The Story of the Book of Mormon*.⁴ His approach might simply be summed up as being a general introduction

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and commentary. The same might be said of the work of his friend and colleague, Janne M. Sjodahl, An Introduction to the Study of the Book of Mormon. Chapter twenty in the latter work dealt particularly with the fundamental doctrines put forth by the Book of Mormon, and proved useful for this study. To date, the largest commentary of a general nature is the Commentary on the Book of Mormon, co-authored by Reynolds and Sjodahl. It reflected an expansion of the same basic efforts begun in their two earlier works. All three works had excellent insights on prophets and doctrines, although not making any correlation directly related to the hypotheses of this study. A vast amount of information related to archaeology, linguistics, literary styles, and historical problems. Most of this was not related to the topic at hand.

Leland H. Monson, author of Ancient America Speaks, presented his own personal insights into the Book of Mormon in an interesting manner and with some scholarly depth. Of value to this study were his chapters related to the purposes of the book, to whom it was written, the biographies of several major prophets, the leading doctrines presented in the book, and the mission of Christ in America. His major intent seemed to be to make the Book of Mormon clearly understandable in spite of its complicated structure, and to bring the lives and teachings of the prophets into a real-life

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2 George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, amplified and arranged by Philip C. Reynolds (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co, 1955-61), 7 Vols.
focus.\footnote{Leland H. Monson, \textit{Ancient America Speaks} (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1958)}

A small study guide prepared by a committee for the Church Department of Education, \textit{A Guide to the Study of the Book of Mormon} looked closely at several specific doctrinal teachings of the Book of Mormon. It was developed as a course of study for college and other advanced courses. The main objective was to encourage the application of these gospel doctrines to present-day life. Its authors first outlined certain concepts and the related references, then presented commentary notes on the topics.\footnote{William E. Berrett and others, \textit{A Guide to the Study of the Book of Mormon} ([Salt Lake City]: Department of Education of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1938).}

A more recent volume by the head of the above committee has expanded upon the doctrinal discussions of the foregoing. Perhaps the most extensive analysis of the doctrines emphasized in the Book of Mormon was the work by William E. Berrett, \textit{Teachings of the Book of Mormon}. He introduced first the objectives behind the Book of Mormon as a whole, then successively, in each of thirty-four brief chapters, turned the light upon one significant theme or doctrine. He presented some of the more prominent passages as examples of a given doctrine, then struck home the application for our day with his incisive commentary. His observations were of value for this study.\footnote{William E. Berrett, \textit{Teachings of the Book of Mormon} (Salt Lake City: Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1962).}
Another general commentary which was remarkably perspicuous was A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon, by Daniel H. Ludlow. Though covering a wide variety of Book of Mormon problems—characters doctrines, history, geography, etc.—it presented some outstanding interpretations, many of which were useful for this project. ¹

Patterns of Conversion in the Book of Mormon was a highly spiritual and insightful monograph by James R. Harris. The concepts developed therein concerned the doctrines taught by Book of Mormon prophets to convert their people to godliness. He also treated briefly certain characteristics of a few prophets, and some of their experiences. His work contributed somewhat toward answering "B" and "E" of the minor hypotheses of this study. ²

As a compilation of significant articles regarding the Book of Mormon, A Book of Mormon Treasury brought together some valuable material under one cover. Its editors have selected several important articles relating to the prophets, and also several pertaining to their doctrines. No general theme was developed, but the anthology served as an excellent commentary on a wide variety of topics, including certain historical aspects of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, plus Biblical and modern evidences for the


validity of the book.¹

An unpublished paper by Vernon Lynn Tyler, entitled "An Analysis of Selected Major Religious Terms as Included in the Book of Mormon," approached rather directly the question of which doctrines received the most emphasis in the Book of Mormon. The paper was a listing of some 300 major conceptual terms used in religious education in the Church today. (He pointed out that these form but a representative sample.) Tyler categorized the terms according to their frequency of significant occurrence in the Book of Mormon. He did not discuss the terms beyond a sentence or two, and no attempt was made to key these concepts to any specific prophets. Unfortunately, the identification of the concepts was not particularly useful in pursuing the present project, for he only supplied one or two key examples for each concept. The next logical step, as approached here, was to specify even more precisely which prophets emphasized which doctrines by means of devoting more than one verse to them.²

In two of his books, Hugh Nibley has produced some excellent and insightful comments concerning the great messages of the Book of Mormon, and the cultural background and environment of some of the prophets in the book. These two volumes were Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites, and An Approach to the Book


²Vernon Lynn Tyler, "An Analysis of Selected Major Religious Terms as Included in the Book of Mormon" (term paper for Graduate Religion 621, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, summer, 1967). (Spirit duplicated.)
of Mormon. The major thesis of both volumes was that the Book of Mormon peoples had strong cultural influences from the Old World, inasmuch as they originally came from there, and that the entire ancient record is replete with items which tie the two cultures together. Much of this material handled archaeological, cultural, historical, and other related topics, but many of his comments about the prophets and their doctrines had a contribution to make toward this study. He brought abundant evidence to bear in support of his ideas about Lehi and Nephi. Likewise, comments about certain leading messages in the book were resourceful and enlightening, particularly his explanation of the relevance of these messages for today. A more recent book, Since Cumorah, broadened the search begun in the first two. His major intent and methods were essentially the same as in the first two works, drawing evidence from sources of the Old World literature to demonstrate the antiquity, historicity, and validity of the Book of Mormon.¹ Some comments from this book were of value for the present study.

Another author, Sidney B. Sperry, has made numerous significant contributions toward an understanding of the mission and doctrines of the prophets. Three of his books touched some points of the topic at hand. Book of Mormon Compendium, his most recent volume, discussed the prophets and some of their teachings. Two

¹Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1952); An Approach to the Book of Mormon (2d ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964); Since Cumorah (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1967).
earlier works, Our Book of Mormon and The Book of Mormon Testifies, were largely subsumed in the Compendium, but a few comments from all three were valuable for this study. They treated the literary aspects of the Book of Mormon, the major messages of the book, certain problems in scholarship, and particularly the character-and background of the various prophets. Although he showed the application of their doctrines to the modern world, Dr. Sperry's treatment did not hit directly on the hypotheses of this dissertation.¹

SUMMARY

Most of the works and authors mentioned in this review dealt with the subject of prophets and doctrines in what might be termed a "general commentary and introduction" vein. Having various purposes in mind, they discussed individual prophets, and also their doctrines, but did not aim at the target of this study. Their comments were definitely useful, nonetheless, in piecing together the evidence needed to draw conclusions concerning the major hypotheses under analysis.

To each of these writers the author owes an expression of gratitude for his labors. It is hoped that this work will likewise be a help to those who follow.

¹Sidney B. Sperry, Our Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1947); The Book of Mormon Testifies (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1952); Book of Mormon Compendium (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968).
PART TWO

FOUR PROPHETS, THEIR PERSONALITIES AND TEACHINGS
Chapter 3

LEHI--PROPHET, HISTORIAN, PIONEER, AND PATRIARCH

Lehi, the prophet who led his colony from Jerusalem to the promised land of the Americas, began the founding era of the Nephite and Lamanite civilizations. His writings appear in the portion of the Book of Mormon known as the small plates of Nephi, the Nephite record covering that era and devoted especially to spiritual affairs. Indeed, his rule over the colony was in the role of a spiritual patriarch. The problems of his ministry are discussed here in relation to his effectiveness and relevance in his major roles as father or patriarch, prophet, historian, and pioneer.

AN INTRODUCTORY LOOK AT LEHI

From his call as a prophet sometime before 600 B.C., Lehi served until somewhere between 588 and 570 B.C. He was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph, who was in turn Jacob's favored son. Apparently an adult when called as a prophet, Lehi had at least four, and possibly more children at the time. Prophets or Church leaders contemporary to him were Jeremiah, possibly Ezekiel and Zephaniah,¹ and his own two sons--Nephi and Jacob. As to his

¹Roy A. West, An Introduction to the Book of Mormon--A Religious-Literary Study Guide (Salt Lake City: Department of Education of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1940), p. 58.
occupation one can only speculate, but he was definitely wealthy, educated, and of a noble family line.¹

THE PROBLEMS OF A PIONEER MINISTRY

Each of the problems of his ministry was analyzed by means of the six minor hypotheses of this study. The twelve problems stated here were the classifications which seemed most logical after careful examination and research.

(1) Calling Jerusalem to Repentance (1 Nephi 1:4-15, 18)

The call to be a prophet plunged Lehi directly into his first problem: wicked Jerusalem must repent or be destroyed, and the Jews taken captive to Babylon. Lehi exhibited the characteristic of courage as he went forth to preach this hard, unpopular message to his people. Other qualifications showing that he was able to cope with this problem included the fact that even before his call he was very concerned and had prayed for his people (1:5). This lively concern again appeared as he quaked and trembled at that which he saw in vision regarding the impending destruction (1:6). A second vision included dire portents regarding the Jews, but the Lord revealed such glorious promises and concepts to Lehi that he was convinced the Lord would answer his prayer and spare those who would repent (1:14). He rejoiced with his whole soul at the knowledge of the coming Messiah, of whom he was now called to bear witness,

¹1 Nephi 5:14; Alma 10:3; heading to 1 Nephi; 2 Nephi 4:12; 1 Nephi 7:14; 1 Nephi 2:4.
declaring the things he had seen and heard (1:18), including the pillar of fire (1:6), and a vision of God, the Messiah, angels, and an inspired book (1:8-13).¹

Armed with these revelation experiences, and with the background of having lived in Jerusalem all of his life (1:4); he went forth to teach the people for whom he felt such a grave concern. Nephi described his father as a good man (1:1), and as one who responded to the words of contemporary prophets (1:4-5); but the Jews mistreated him just as they did Jeremiah and others, seeking his life (1:19-20). He prophesied to them (1:18) and evidently kept records of the things which he prophesied (1:16-17), testifying of their wickedness and abominations (1:19), and predicting the coming Messiah. These emphasized teachings were observed to be very relevant to the problem.² At this point Lehi cited no prophets from the Bible, but spoke with authority from God, and the Melchizedek priesthood, which he passed on to succeeding generations.³

The investigation next turned to an examination of his successes and the people's responses. Though he was poetic by nature (1:14); and a learned man in both the Jewish and Egyptian languages (1:2), the major quality which Lehi exemplified was faith (1:20; 2:1), and for this the Jews mocked him, were angry, and sought his life

¹Nephi recorded the second vision in more detail than the first.

²"emphasized teachings" as defined in Criteria for Analyzing Data, in chapter 1.

(1:19-20). It was interesting and valuable to note that the Biblical record described the events of those times in precisely the same manner (2 Chron. 36:16).

President George Q. Cannon, commenting on Lehi, stated:

To tell wicked people of their sins and of the destruction of their government or city makes them angry. It wounds their self-love; it insults their personal and national pride, and it scarcely ever fails to rouse their hatred.¹

Dr. Hugh Nibley has assembled much evidence suggesting that Lehi was of the old, conservative, landed aristocracy who were opposed to the "crazy ways and policies of the new rulers."² He has asserted that Lehi's family lineage, ancient family record, lands of inheritance and "all manner of riches" all point to an association with the prophets and conservatives, such as Jeremiah, who were seeking to right the "ship of state" which was being run aground by Zedekiah and those even more powerful than he: the new aristocracy.

Lehi was evidently a figure of sufficient importance that the populace could not ignore him. Though they rejected him, his prophecy came true. His effectiveness and later impact upon his own posterity was much greater, one example being that Alma drew a parallel between his own experiences and the vision Lehi had (1 Nephi 1:8; Alma 36:22).


Being warned of the Lord that his life was in danger, and being commanded to depart, Lehi promptly prepared and fled from Jerusalem. Though his life was in jeopardy, leaving his inheritance, his wealth (2:4), and not remaining to succor Jerusalem still required courage. He and his family would forever feel as outcasts, and lonely, as reported by Jacob.\(^1\) Though not of the tribe of Judah, they felt at home in Jerusalem, the land of promise to the house of Israel.

Lehi's qualifications to meet this problem, in addition to courage, included the even greater need of humility, for "... he doubtless shared in the peace and prosperity which prevailed during the long and successful reign of the faithful King Josiah, ..."\(^2\) This is an important consideration, indicating that Lehi's wealth came at a time when the rest of the country was prospering. The pride of the wealthy increased, whereas Lehi became more humble, even being willing to forsake his possessions. Since pride through wealth later destroyed the Nephite nation (Mormon 8:27), Lehi's exemplary humility provided a great lesson for his posterity.

Added to humility, faith, and obedience (2:3), was the quality of gratitude (2:7) in his soul. He knew that the Lord had delivered him.

Though he had been commanded in a dream (2:1-2) to leave,

\(^1\)Jacob 7:26; cf. Alma 13:23; 26:36. \(^2\)Cannon, p. 4.
yet Lehi had a practical sense of values, seemingly, and was not a blind visionary. Of what use would his wealth be to him in the desert?—only a burden. Apparently by that time Lehi knew their destination, and knew of the promises of the Lord to him and his posterity regarding a promised land—one in addition to the promised land in which he then lived. This, too, would make it easier for him to leave all.

Though he took little, it was adequate for the desert trip (2:4), suggesting that he knew desert ways and needs. One may conclude that "... when he had to send back to the city to supply unanticipated wants, it was for records that he sent and not for any necessaries for the journey ...." The records which were to supply their spiritual needs for the "journey of one thousand years" were sacred scripture, as described below in problem four. He did go prepared, however, with a knowledge of the rites of sacrifice (2:7), and thus could function as a spiritual leader for his family.

One further, important effect of the departure was that Laman and Lemuel were to be cursed for their murmuring if they did not repent, whereas Nephi was promised he would attain to the status of ruler and teacher over the colony if he remained faithful (2:19-22).

That Lehi was effective in his secret flight was later

1 When Nephi spoke of the promised land (2:20), it was not introduced as an unknown, but as something on which Nephi was seeking personal confirmation. Cannon held this same view in his book, p. 15.

2 Nibley, p. 61.
attested by Mormon (3 Nephi 5:20), who reported that ". . . no one knew it save it were himself and those whom he brought out of that land . . . ." Alma, in his time, reminded his people that the Lord had been the one to bring Lehi out safely (Alma 9:9). A later prophet named Nephi bore record that Lehi was driven out of Jerusalem for testifying of the Messiah's coming (Helaman 8:22). Even the time-reckoning system of the Nephites was based upon Lehi's departure.\(^1\) Although no particular doctrinal teachings came in connection with the incident, the departure left a powerful effect upon the future of his posterity.

(3) Trying to Convert His Rebellious Sons (1 Nephi 2:8-10, 14-15; 8:2-38; 10:2-16; 2 Nephi 1:13-27)

Lehi's next problem had to do with Laman and Lemuel, the rebellious ones. In dealing with these murmuring sons, Lehi apparently had three goals in mind: (1) to halt their negative influence upon the colony, (2) to bring them to righteousness, preventing their destruction and cursing, and (3) to have joy and gladness because of them.\(^2\)

Aside from the qualification of being their father, which was significant, Lehi possessed a special parental tenderness (1 Nephi 8:37). Perhaps most striking was the fact that he feared exceedingly for their welfare, as described in the account of a

\(^1\) 2 Nephi 5:28; Jacob 1:1; Enos 1:25; Mosiah 2:34; 6:4; 28:20; 29:46; Alma 18:36, 38; 28:2; 3 Nephi 1:1; 2:6; 5:15.

\(^2\) (1) 1 Nephi 2:14; (2) 1 Nephi 2:9-10; 8:37-38; 2 Nephi 1:12-27; (3) 2 Nephi 1:21.
dream-vision. Not only was he receptive to the Spirit of the Lord as he attempted to re-train them, but he demonstrated tact in his desire to warn his children (2:9-10; 8:37-38). An uplifting, edifying effort came before chastisement. He was a teacher, a sharer, a giver, a missionary by nature, wanting to help them find the joy of the gospel (8:12-17). His dream (8:1-38) did not condemn Laman and Lemuel; rather, they were positively encouraged to behave contrary to the dream and indeed partake of the fruit of the tree of life.

When his sons failed to respond to his tact and fatherly concern, the Spirit caused him to speak with power, rebuking and confounding them (2:9-10). The success of the future nation depended upon it, so the Lord blessed him with ample aid. On the other hand, though he could be direct and blunt in warning (2 Nephi 1:3-12), he could express gratitude and love to those who were obedient, such as Nephi (2 Nephi 1:1, 24-25).

Even though Laman and Lemuel had been through the same desert and crossed the same ocean, they did not perceive the causes and spiritual powers behind their deliverance. Having been through these same experiences with them, and being able to maintain his eternal perspective, Lehi was in a good position to communicate with them.

In his final discourse to his sons he showed real concern for the fact that they had rebelled upon the waters, stressing the mercy of the Lord in sparing their lives (2 Nephi 1:2-3). His major concern was for their eternal welfare. Being nearly ready to die,
he wanted to make one last effort toward converting his wayward sons. He had been favored with a dream of their possible future (1 Nephi 8:2) and had been filled with the Spirit of the Lord while instructing them (2:14; 10:17), but for his last instructions and patriarchal blessing the Spirit of the Lord blessed him greatly (2 Nephi 1:6; 4:12). The discourse was so momentous that Nephi included it verbatim on his Small Plates, his concise spiritual record.

Consideration of his style of action and his teaching methods showed that he was prone to use persuasion and other verbal abilities rather than physical actions. Dr. Nibley has commented on the similarity of this characteristic in modern Arab sheikhs.¹

The attribute of seeking to elevate and edify his sons marked Lehi as a strongly spiritual man. Although he had to rebuke them strongly and confound them on one occasion, at all other times he sought to uplift: speaking of his vision (8:36), exhorting, preaching, prophesying, and bidding them to keep the commandments (8:38). He also spoke of the future of the Jews, and the coming of the Messiah and his gospel (10:2-15). In his last discourse he reached a spiritual peak, reminding them of their past spiritual experiences (2 Nephi 1:1-3), telling of his vision of the destruction of Jerusalem (1:4), and then making a prophecy which remained as a theme throughout the Book of Mormon. Therein he detailed the promises and curses in connection with the land of promise (2 Nephi

¹Nibley, p. 201.
1:6-12, 20). He pleaded with his sons to avoid the curses, holding out to them his "first blessing," and urging them to hearken to the wisdom of Nephi (2 Nephi 1:28-29). In all his warnings he concluded by holding out increased joy to them. Lehi's yearning as a parent was evident, but his conviction of the justness of God's dealings came through with such clarity that it was apparent that he knew something of the tragic future of his posterity, through revelation or even vision, as Nephi did (1 Nephi 12:1-23).

Lehi's language seemed to rise to its zenith in teaching his sons. He uttered poetry of compelling power and beauty, impressing Nephi to record it. The wording of his dream of the tree of life was simple, but the images were rich with meaning—a great classic (1 Nephi 8:1-36). One effect of the symbolic dream, so characteristic of Jewish writing, was to stimulate Nephi to seek out the interpretation (1 Nephi 10:17; 11:1). Lehi ably delivered a prophetic discourse, including many doctrinal proofs and references to prophets (1 Nephi 10:2-15), such as the discussion of an allegory which Jacob later quoted in full (Jacob 5). The allegory was relevant to the situation, because of having been written by Zenos to all of the house of Israel (1 Nephi 15:12), but particularly because Lehi was a descendant of that same prophet Zenos (3 Nephi 10:16). Though Lehi primarily used doctrinal abstractions, at times he spoke in descriptive language imagery familiar to his audience (1 Nephi 8:1-36), or mixed in poetic images in the form of specific objects, such as "sword; sleep; chains; dust; and the

1Nibley, p. 221.
persuasion in obtaining the help of the older sons.

Lehi seemingly knew Laban, for he referred to him familiarly (3:3). Indeed, as the record later reveals, Lehi and Laban were kinsmen (5:16).

Lehi's teaching methods and relevant teachings, even in this briefly-reported incident, were of like positive quality with his other discourses. He testified that the commandment was of God, repeating the word "commanded" three times. His approach to Nephi was to compliment him first for not murmuring (3:6). As already mentioned, he gave his older sons first opportunity to display a positive acceptance. Always a teacher, he stated that obedience brings the Lord's favor (3:6, 8). Upon his sons' safe return, his offering of sacrifices taught the principle of gratitude toward God (5:9).

Although his effectiveness with the older sons was minimal, Lehi's approach to Nephi caused him to respond with a youthful intensity of faith which produced an oft-quoted passage (3:7). President Joseph Fielding Smith affirmed the seriousness of the enterprise by recalling that ". . . it was a matter of spiritual life or death to have in their possession the sacred records."1 This suggested that looking at the effects upon subsequent generations would be worthwhile. How interesting, then, to note that the sacred record, the plates of brass, were used and referred to as late as A.D. 34 (3 Nephi 10:17), and probably till the end of

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1Smith, IV, 113.
the Nephite nation.

(5) Comforting Sariah  
(1 Nephi 5:1-8)

The next challenge to Lehi's abilities came while his sons were seeking the plates. Lehi was a prophet, but he was also a husband, and subject to the requirements of gently persuading his wife when she began to fear her sons had perished. Many years of living with Sariah evidently had taught him how to help her, for he did not begin with a rebuke nor in agitated anger.

"... It was bad enough to endure the taunts and persecutions of the Jews, and the unbelief and stubbornness of his eldest sons. But how very painful to witness the tears and deep grief of his wife, and to hear her make such accusations as these!"

His response to her complaint was a positive reference to his vision, full of conviction and spiritually elevated language. He testified that they had been spared, they had great things to hope for, and the Lord would deliver their sons in the same way he had preserved the whole family. His call as a prophet gave him added wisdom to settle a normal husband-wife problem.

Sariah's immediate response was not visible from the record, but when her sons returned, then she partook deeply of the same spiritual conviction which her husband shared regarding the true source of his actions and their preservation (5:7-8). The seeds of faith planted in her mind by Lehi did more than merely give her relief of mind respecting a transitory problem--they converted her

1Cannon, pp. 35-36.
when the prediction came true.

(6) Reading Plates of Brass in Egyptian (1 Nephi 5:10-19)

When the plates of brass arrived, Lehi had a new problem: reading them. Inasmuch as Lehi's principal dwelling place or residence was at Jerusalem (1:4), some have wondered at his ability to read Egyptian. Nephi testified, however, that Lehi was learned in matters both Jewish and Egyptian (1:2). A later prophet, Benjamin, was the informant who affirmed that the Plates of Brass were written in Egyptian, and that Lehi could read them, "... having been taught in the language of the Egyptians ..." (Mosiah 1:4). Researchers in modern times have affirmed that during Lehi's life Jewish relations with Egypt were flourishing as perhaps never before.¹

Whether learning Egyptian through trading contacts or otherwise, Lehi had the ability to read Egyptian, and evidently read the plates without difficulty. The effect upon Nephi was to cause him to say of the plates that "... they were desirable; yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children." (5:21.) Lehi was so affected by his thorough search of the record (5:10) and by the Spirit of the Lord which filled him (5:17) that he prophesied regarding the future of his seed. He also prophesied that the plates of brass would be preserved for his posterity and would never perish

¹Nibley, pp. 67-74; for a somewhat different view see Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968), pp. 31-39.
Lehi's faith in this case was strongly evident, for he issued a prophecy of a great posterity to come from himself, although his sons were not married, and no marriageable women were available! The Lord later fulfilled this prophecy and rewarded Lehi's faith by commanding him to send for Israelite wives. (See next problem.)

A further question regarding Lehi's ability to handle this problem related to his teaching that he was a descendant of Joseph, through Manasseh. Although Dr. Nibley has suggested that Lehi "for the first time" discovered that he was a direct descendant of Joseph, it appeared to be just as plausible to interpret the genealogy incident in an entirely different manner: Since Israelites were very tribal-conscious, Lehi very likely knew that he was of Joseph through Manasseh. This was observed in the fact that he apparently knew the names of enough of his ancestors to tie into Laban's record. The fact that he "discovered" his genealogy may simply mean that he had in his hands for the first time a record which proved his lineage clear back to Joseph.

Later influences of this incident were noted in Mosiah 1:4, where King Benjamin extolled the value of the plates which Lehi brought from Jerusalem.

(7) Sending Sons for Wives
(1 Nephi 7:1-2, 22; 8:1)

Again the Lord spoke to Lehi, commanding him that Nephi and his brethren should return to Jerusalem to obtain wives by means of

1 Nibley, pp. 55-56.
persuading Ishmael and his family to join the colony. Lehi's capacity to cope with this assignment seemingly rested upon three things: (1) his faith in the Lord, (2) the willingness of his sons to fulfill the Lord's request (no report of any reluctance!), and (3) the fact that Ishmael may have already had some relationship to Lehi's family.¹ Lehi's effectiveness in this situation was indisputable. No teachings were recorded in connection with the event. Nephi's narration of the account was simple and straightforward.

The success of the enterprise was celebrated by offering sacrifice and burnt offerings in thanksgiving unto the Lord (7:22). This was probably also an offering of thanksgiving for the harvest of food mentioned in the next verse (8:1).

The relevance and appropriateness of such a ceremony at that time was observed in the fact that the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles always came at the end of the harvest season. Lehi's sacrificial offerings were thus well timed (Leviticus 23:33-43). A careful examination likewise showed that their first sacrifice (1 Nephi 2:7) was remarkably close to the time of the Feast of the Passover (cf. 1 Nephi 1:4; Exodus 12:2-3), and their second sacrifice could easily have occurred at the time of the Feast of Pentecost, the other of the three major feasts of the Jews (cf. 1 Nephi 5:9; Leviticus 23:16).

Some further evidences verifying these similarities were Laban's drunkenness and the fact that this corresponded with the

¹This depends upon the interpretation one makes of a discourse by Elder Erastus Snow. For a discussion of this see Sperry, pp. 108-9.
over-indulgence known to exist during those festive times, and his nighttime association with the Jewish elders while being dressed in armor--the tumults and massacres at such times being notorious.1 Another resemblance to the Jewish feasts was the way Zoram, the servant of Laban, readily carried forth the scriptures to be delivered to the elders of the church--the same thing mentioned as having occurred at a feast not many years previously (2 Kings 23: 1-3, 21-23).

This remarkable parallel of Lehi's flight to Moses' exodus (both at the time of the Passover) was further heightened by Nephi's repeated comments, near the time of their harvest sacrifice, that his father's dwelling place was a "tent" (1 Nephi 9:1; 10:16; 16:6). During the Feast of Tabernacles all of Israel were to dwell in temporary booths commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Leviticus 23:42-43). Since, as Nephi later affirmed, the colony endeavored to keep the Law of Moses (2 Nephi 5:10), the observance of the major feast days would have been a part of their religious lives. The lengthy instructions from Lehi and Nephi to the colony seemed to coincide with these worship services.

A final item showing the relevance or effectiveness of Lehi's actions following the harvest season was the Lord's command to leave the valley of Lemuel and depart into the desert. Since they would want to travel during the rainy winter season, and possibly

plant a crop at their next stop, that was the most logical time for them to leave (8:1; 16:9).

(8) Journeying into the Wilderness (1 Nephi 16:9-17; 17:12-14)

Lehi's next problem marked the beginning of the second phase of his flight. Having resided temporarily in the valley of Lemuel, Lehi heard the voice of the Lord at night (16:9) commanding him to depart the next day into the depths of the wilderness. An obvious related problem was obtaining food. A further, and more important goal was the obtaining of faith in the Lord, according to Alma's later commentary (Alma 37:41-42). (Various other aspects of the total situation are treated in the succeeding chapter on the life of Nephi.)

An investigation of Lehi's qualifications regarding such an assignment showed again that he had faith. The morning after the Lord's command, Lehi received a gift from the Lord which worked by faith (16:10, 28). It served as a compass-like director to tell them where to go, not merely to show the location of the magnetic poles. Father Lehi's leadership in the desert was therefore based upon faith. The refugees had been given food by the Lord (16:11); and they carried an abundance of seed, which, according to their faith, they were going to plant in the promised land (8:1; 16:11; 18:24). Even the very sons born to Lehi in the desert were given names—Jacob and Joseph (18:7)—which connoted an increasing conversion and faith on the part of Lehi.¹

¹Nibley, p. 60.
As a result of this attitude, great teachings from the Lord came to Lehi, and to Nephi, for the edification of the entire group preparatory to launching out into the great and inhospitable desert. They needed the spiritual provisions (including the plates of brass which they had already received) just as much as the physical ones. As an added boost to the faith of the party, just before they turned due east into the depths of the worst part of the desert (17:1), the Lord gave them the assuring comfort of his voice (the main function being to chasten the rebels--16:39).

The Lord's choice of the "desert test," to shape up the colonists in faith and spirituality, argued that they were not used to much travel of this particular severity. The temporary end of murmuring during the worst stretch of the journey (17:1-2) strongly suggested that what had been going on was not merely the typical Arab grumbling, though similar of course. What was truly at stake was the spirit of "murder," not merely "murmur," which the Lord was seeking to purge out of them. The one could lead to the other. This bore a resemblance to Moses' people and their problems in many particulars, as Nephi keenly noted when confronted with the murmurings of his brothers (1 Nephi 4:2; 17:23-42). Likening Lehi's eight years in the wilderness to the forty years spent by Moses' people, George Q. Cannon remarked:

So in the case of Lehi and his family and company, they needed training, though not for so long a period as their

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1 Nephi 8:1-38; 10:2-15; 11:1 to 16:5).

2 Nephi 7:16; 16:37; 17:2, 17, 44.
forefathers. While they were inexperienced, trifles annoyed and worried them; they had not learned to patiently endure and submit to privations and hardships. Their previous lives had been passed, doubtless, in circumstances of ease and plenty. Want had been unknown to them, but they now had to lead a new life, the comforts to which they had been accustomed, they had to dispense with and not complain at their loss.  

The investigation next looked at the types of revelation received by Lehi on the trek. Human knowledge alone, without faith, caused that they "... did not travel a direct course ..." toward their destination (Alma 37:42). 2 Whatever Lehi's knowledge of desert lore, it was the ball, or Liahona, which led them "... in the more fertile parts of the wilderness" (16:16). One example of revelation concerned fire (17:12-14). Although Nephi was the one who reported the word of the Lord regarding not having much fire, and that He would be the light leading them to the promised land, since Lehi was still the presiding prophet, and since these words might well have been given through the Liahona (16:29), Lehi's instrument of revelation, the teachings were here attributed to Lehi.

With regard to Lehi's successes, the very fact that the pilgrims were successful in crossing the fearsome desert was proof that Lehi learned, if he did not know before, how to cope with this problem both spiritually and physically. Dr. Nibley has proposed the thought that the Liahona showed them the same secret method of desert survival which the Arabs have guarded jealously for centuries,

1Cannon, pp. 47-48.  
2Nibley, pp. 185-86.
namely, "touring," or following the path of vegetation in the depressions of dried river beds.\(^1\) Though the river beds wandered a crooked path, the record makes it clear that the journey was prolonged to eight years as a result of disobedience and lack of faith on the part of the entire colony, with the exception of Nephi.\(^2\)

A later effect was seen in only one direct passage, wherein Alma cited the Lord's care for Lehi's group while traveling through the wilderness (Alma 9:9).\(^3\)

(9) Having Faith, and Obtaining Food, After Nephi's Bow Broke

\((1\text{ Nephi 16:20, 25-27, 32})\)

While hunting, Nephi broke his fine steel bow, leaving the colony without any significant means of obtaining food. Lehi, himself, began to murmur against the Lord at this point (16:20). This was the saddest event of Lehi's life, according to the present record. It tried his faith beyond his strength or willingness to endure, apparently because he saw his families beginning to starve. Circumstantial evidence suggested that this might well have been the time of his youngest son's birth (2 Nephi 3:1), which would have been a further matter of concern to load upon his already-burdened faith.

That Lehi made this one mistake in his prophetic career

\(^1\)Nibley, pp. 185-86. \(^2\)Mosiah 1:16-17; Alma 37:41-42.

\(^3\)Obviously, the most direct or straight course to the promised land would not be a straight line, as Alma 37:43-44 might seem to imply, but a course following the fertile paths, or perhaps shifting from path to path (1 Nephi 16:16).
classed him with Joseph Smith, the brother of Jared, and Moses, ¹ who also made mistakes. He particularly resembled Moses, in that it was over a lack of water that Moses stumbled. It was instructive to find that even these greatest of men were not perfect by comparison with Jesus Christ. Lehi was not deposed, however, from being the patriarch of the nation chosen as the branch broken off the lineage of Joseph of Egypt (Gen. 49:22-26). He still had great qualifications.

Having been rather wealthy, Lehi may not have had the problem of urgent hunger before. The incident became even more understandable when Lehi's fairly advanced age was considered (cf. 18:17).

Lehi's faltering apparently catalyzed Nephi's faith (16:20-22). As he saw his father murmuring, he knew that success depended greatly upon his spiritual endurance. ² Lehi had humbled himself upon hearing his son's words of faith, and when Nephi asked him to pray to the Lord to ask where he should go to obtain food, Lehi re-exerted his faith and prayed. In response came the Lord's voice, and Lehi was "... truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow." (16:25.) Then he and the others began to fear and tremble at what they saw written on the Liahona by the Lord (16:27).


²See 2 Nephi 1:24 for Lehi's tribute to Nephi.
Excepting Nephi, apparently "all" of the colony murmured (Sam, Zoram, Sariah, and the other women--16:20, 27); but Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael "murmured exceedingly" (16:20).

The record did not provide details as to the reaction of Laman and Lemuel to Lehi's murmuring. From the fact that they trembled at the Lord's rebuke, and then were humbled when Nephi returned with food (16:27, 32), they evidently learned a powerful lesson from the Lord, if not from seeing that even a prophet is not exempt from error or chastening. It was interesting to note that no later effects were apparent regarding Lehi's temporary faltering, as seen in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.

(10) Sailing to the Promised Land (1 Nephi 18:5-8, 17-18)

According to Elder John A. Widtsoe, "Lehi was called to re-establish the church on the American continent."¹ Obeying the voice of the Lord to him (18:5) following their successful arrival on the fruitful coast of Arabia and Nephi's construction of a ship, Lehi caused his family to embark on the vessel. Again, this manifested faith of an immense sort on the part of Lehi. They all entered ceremonially, "... every one according to his age..." (18:6), befitting the fact that the Lord had prepared the vessel to carry them to a promised land, where his church was to be re-established. Inasmuch as Lehi was not a qualified mariner, as could be easily

gathered from the record, he had to perform his function as captain of the ship by means of faith, which was precisely what the Lord desired (17:13).

Although Nephi, younger and physically stronger, had received the inspired assignment to create the ship (17:7-11), Lehi was yet the spiritual leader of the colony. From the record, Lehi's strong character had not weakened, despite the fact that his great son Nephi was being favored with revelation to further the colonists on their way. The mutiny aboard ship (18:9-21) was evidence that both Nephi and Lehi were powerless against Laman's faction when the Lord chose to delay His aid. The fact that Lehi admonished them in vain (18:17) reflected no lack of potency on his part, but conversely proved their increasing wickedness and insensitivity to spiritual guidance. On prior occasions they had been subdued by the Lord's overt power, manifest through Lehi and later through Nephi, as well as by the power of their frequent preaching. The sermon of the tempest was now the only message to which they would listen as it prophesied of their doom lest they repent.1

One later effect upon his posterity of Lehi's arrival in the promised land was that the entire land south was denominated "Lehi," in honor of the patriarch of their nation (Helaman 6:10).

Nearing the end of his life, Lehi faced the responsibility of leaving his last, patriarchal blessings and instructions for his colony. The first part of this problem, that of instructing and correcting his rebellious children, was treated largely under problem three, above. The remainder of the challenge had to do with his patriarchal blessings upon all, and his doctrinal teachings to his two younger sons.

Lehi's major goals seemingly were to (1) leave his first blessing upon the righteous; (2) include Nephi's friend, Zoram, under his fatherly blessing, and join Sam's posterity with Nephi's; (3) convey doctrinal instructions to his sons Jacob and Joseph, who were yet young, as well as deliver these instructions in the hearing of his rebellious children; (4) leave a special promise upon Joseph that his descendants would not be totally destroyed; and (5) seal a blessing upon the posterity of his rebellious children, that their cursing would revert upon the heads of their rebellious parents.¹

Lehi's qualifications for meeting this challenge were seen in many particulars of the account. If it is true that the characteristics which one cultivates most in life are the most evident in the twilight of life, then Lehi had spent a lifetime cultivating concern

¹(1) 2 Nephi 1:28-29; (2) 1:30-32; 4:11; (3) 2:1-30; 3:1-25; (4) 3:23-25; (5) 4:3-10.
for the eternal welfare of the souls of his children (2 Nephi 2:30). His great desire was that they hearken to Christ (2:28-29).

Being near death's door, Lehi was in command of that which was perhaps the most advantageous moment of his life to instruct his posterity—the point of giving his final blessing. Even his most rebellious children knew that without the fellowship of their family in this new-found land they were lost. That the Lamanites later rebelled against Lehi and full family fellowship, and ignored the privilege of acquiring his "first" blessing, demonstrated the seriousness of their hardened condition. Later generations seemed to attempt to cover up this rift with their father, for they always laid the blame at Nephi's door, and were constantly silent about the conditions of Lehi's "first blessing." They even went so far as to claim that Lehi was expelled from Jerusalem because of his wickedness, apparently also including Ishmael in their denunciation (Mosiah 10:11-17).

The tradition of the Israelites, based on the practices handed down from Abraham's time and before, was to give a father's (patrimorial) blessing. The patriarch's responsibility was to unify, teach and correct his family. Lehi, finding himself alone with his family in the promised land, responded to this obligation thrust upon him by the Lord. Being a student of the scriptures, Joseph of Egypt's patriarchal blessing upon his posterity being a case in point, Lehi came well prepared to meet this

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1Genesis 34:30; 35:2-4; 49:1-27.
challenge. Furthermore, he may well have been the oldest son of his father, which would have given him an acute understanding of the law of primogeniture. This was evident in that he spoke of the "first blessing" as being ". . . my blessing." (1:29, underlining added).

Regarding the blessing upon Laman and his group, Lehi stood in a position of strength, having expended great fatherly love and wisdom to teach and reclaim them. His skirts were therefore clear as he warned them of the judgments to follow if they did not repent (1:28-29).

As a prophet and a student of the scriptures, and personally taught by the Lord. Lehi was well prepared to instruct Jacob and Joseph in the teachings of the gospel plan of salvation. His understanding of the scriptures from Joseph of Egypt assisted him in giving the assurance to his son Joseph that his seed would not be utterly destroyed (3:3). The most important qualification, however, was his possession of the Spirit as he predicted the application of Joseph's prophecy to his own descendants.\(^1\) Lehi was apparently full of the Spirit at this time (4:12), being strengthened greatly just prior to his death.

Another qualification Lehi possessed was a background of numerous powerful confrontations with the concept that opposition was a basic part of the plan of the Lord. This he sought to teach

\(^1\)Genesis 49:22 spoke of "branches" in the plural. That this denoted the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh was expounded by President Joseph Fielding Smith in his *Answers to Gospel Questions V* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1966), p. 70.
Jacob (2:1-2, 10-30). In addition, Lehi apparently had found joy in his life by means of choosing the good part in contrast to the opposition which he faced (2:25).

In pronouncing a blessing upon the posterity of Laman and Lemuel (4:3-9), Lehi's authority seemed to be very great, suggesting that he possessed the sealing power. Thereby the Lord would acknowledge Lehi's blessing as superseding the cursing imposed upon them by the actions of their fathers. This power would have been of indispensable value in solving the problem he faced.\(^1\) In this he appeared very practical. Another example of his practicality was his statement, "... men are, that they might have joy." (2:25.) Although accused at times of having been a dreamer, Lehi spoke in practical terms of what the soul of man desires right here in life, expressing it with poetic conciseness.

Lehi's poetic speaking ability gave him a command of language which rendered the blessings into a beautiful and memorable style. Furthermore, his prophetic vision enabled him to foresee the future of the nation, right down to the last days, and to leave advice which would succor his posterity in those distant times (1:5-20; 3:2-25).

The character of Lehi as a gospel scholar and philosopher, and as a man of wisdom, were revealed perhaps nowhere more strikingly than in his blessing upon Jacob. The challenge facing Lehi was to

\(^1\)For an understanding of this power, see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, II (Salt City: Bookcraft, 1955), pp. 117-18.
instruct the future prophet of the Nephite church in some basic doctrines which Jacob would apparently have much need of during his own ministry (cf. 2 Nephi chaps. 6-10). Lehi's understanding of the scriptures had a depth of insight born of visions of the Christ, but also of being learned in the culture and language of the Jews and Egyptians (1 Nephi 1:2). This enabled him to comprehend the subtle meanings within the ancient scriptures.\(^1\) He took this occasion to instruct all of his family in these doctrines, although they primarily formed a part of Jacob's patriarchal blessing.

The philosophical logic and wisdom present in Jacob's blessing were displayed in abstractions in a majority of verses, but Lehi's language did not reflect the symbolism and "Jewishness" of his tree of life dream. Although using a prose style, his words were beautiful and contained a poetic beauty.

Lehi's descendants distinguished themselves in works of engineering, mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences, as numerous scholars and archaeologists have observed. It was impressive therefore to note, in relation to Lehi's effect and relevance, some striking examples of the philosophical basis of science in his writings. Particularly evident were laws of spiritual motion or growth, on a parallel with the laws of motion formulated by Sir Isaac Newton.\(^2\) From the blessing upon Jacob, but restated,

\(^1\)Cf. one of Nephi's "keys" to the scriptures, 2 Nephi 25:5.

\(^2\)Newton's laws: 1. (Law of Inertia) "... a body continues in its state of rest or uniform motion unless an unbalanced force acts on it." 2. (Law of acceleration) "The acceleration of a body is directly proportional to the mass of the body, and is in the same
these were as follows:

1. Man's innocence (ignorance) and agency continue at their same uniform levels unless he is enticed or acted upon by either God or the devil. (2 Nephi 2:11, 13, 16, 22, 23.)

2. Spiritual growth is directly proportional to the faith exerted, inversely proportional to the will of the flesh, and in the same direction as the faith. (2 Nephi 2:27-29).

3. For every step of spiritual growth there is an equal and opposite trial or affliction. (2 Nephi 2:2, 11.)

Newton's laws of motion served as a basis for the great scientific developments during the classical era of physics. The world has prospered greatly from such knowledge. So likewise, Lehi's teachings on opposition laid a foundation, showing his people how they could prosper in the land by keeping the commandments (2 Nephi 1:20), choosing the positive or good alternative rather than the negative or evil one (2 Nephi 2:30).

The universal application of these laws in both the physical and the spiritual realm made it apparent that Lehi perceived much of the true nature of being in things both animate and inanimate. The doctrine that opposition is necessary in all directions as the force. 3. (Law of interaction) "... for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," Charles E. Dull, H. Clark Metcalfe, and John E. Williams, Modern Physics (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 89-91, 93; see also Andrew Motte (trans.), Sir Isaac Newton's Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy and His System of the World, rev. Florian Cajori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), p. 13.

1 Cf. D&C 29:34; also 93:30
things (2 Nephi 2:11) was observed to be the fundamental principle involved in the Nephite-Lamanite struggles. The Lord purposely used the Lamanites to maintain this balance, allowing them to scourge the Nephites when the latter rebelled (1 Nephi 2:23-24). The application of these principles, as Lehi extended them in his discourse to Jacob, ranged from God and His adversary the devil, to physical prosperity, political liberty, and individual agency. One may broaden the scope of these principles in modern sciences to include electricity and magnetism, which clearly consist of opposite polarities, both positive and negative.

One final aspect of Lehi's language ability concerned his blessing upon Joseph. Although the wording was simple, his quotations contained statements which remain veiled in prophetic mystery to those not acquainted with the fulfillment of the prophecy.¹ This was further complicated by the fact that Lehi presented and expounded a text of Genesis which is not in the present Bible, aside from Joseph Smith's Inspired Version of the Bible.²

Regarding Lehi's methods of approaching and teaching his older, rebellious sons, one might ask whether he was wise to urge

¹For a Latter-day Saint view of the fulfillment, see George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, I (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1955), pp. 253-56. Verses 24 and 25 of 2 Nephi 3 have been particularly puzzling to readers. For the view of a modern prophet on the subject, see Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, II, 251.

them to "... hearken unto the voice of Nephi..." (1:28). This suggestion had never been popular with them. Lehi was apparently merely asking them to follow the Lord's ways, not seeking to strip them of their right to leadership. Father Lehi knew that Nephi would not depart from the right. Thus, Laman and Lemuel still could have remained the presiding tribes by following their wise younger brother's counsel. Lehi very objectively stated (4:3-9) that the children of Laman and Lemuel would be blessed in accordance with their response to the Lord's laws. Desiring to succor them, and knowing that their fathers might fail in their duty as parents, Lehi then left an auxiliary blessing upon them. This had the effect, as noted above, of placing the entire curse of a nation upon the heads of Laman and Lemuel, and apparently their wives.

A subtotal at this point with respect to the methods Lehi used in his final discourse, reveals these teaching techniques: patriarchal blessing, philosophical exposition, prophetic prediction, doctrinal instruction, and references to other prophets (Adam, Moses, and Joseph).

The conspicuous absence of a directly stated blessing upon Nephi and upon Sam caused this researcher to wonder and then to ponder. As stated above, Lehi apparently knew the importance of the "first blessing." Since this first blessing finally came to rest upon Nephi, and was jointly shared by Sam--and yet was not detailed in Lehi's final discourse--it was important to determine exactly of what it consisted. Fortunately, some of the pieces were gatherable from (1) the prophecy made by Jacob (Israel) upon the
head of Joseph, and (2) the covenants made by the Lord with Lehi.1

Being a peruser of the Plates of Brass, and knowing the life of
Joseph, son of Israel, Lehi was well equipped to state to his sons
what his own blessing was, and to pass it on to them.

The interesting denouement of this blessing upon Sam, who
had reportedly never faltered in his support of Nephi, was that no
"Samites" were described in the Book of Mormon. They truly became
"... numbered with..." the seed of Nephi (2 Nephi 4:11) and
became strictly known as Nephites, although others of the righteous
preserved the tribal distinctions of Jacobites, Josephites, and
Zoramites right to the end of the Nephite polity (Mormon 1:8).

The effectiveness or success of Lehi's other blessings
varied in proportion to the righteousness of the recipients. Zoram's
immediate reaction was not given by the historian, nor were the
immediate reactions of the others recorded. That Zoram did live
righteously and had a righteous posterity who affiliated with the
Nephites rather than with the Lamanites for most of their history
was evident from numerous passages.2 They had apostate remnants
who gravitated to the Lamanites at the end of the Book of Mormon
and are yet extant today, according to the testimony of modern
scripture (D&C 3:17).

Upon Laman and Lemuel came the cursing, for they rejected
the first blessing and led their children astray. The lasting

1 (1) Gen. 48:16; 49:22-26; (2) 1 Nephi 5:5; 10:12-14;
15:7-19; 2 Nephi 1:5-12.

2 Jacob 1:13; 4 Nephi 1:36-37; Mormon 1:8.
effect of the blessing is based upon the eternal nature of the sealing power. This long-range effect has been evident throughout the entire history of the Lamanites until recent years. The fact that they were not utterly destroyed, but are even now joining the Church in ever-larger numbers, has made it apparent that Lehi's prediction has been verified (2 Nephi 4:7-9).\(^1\)

In the case of Jacob, Lehi's prediction came true that his son would spend his days in the service of the Lord (2 Nephi 2:3). Jacob served as the mortal head of the Church following Nephi's death (Jacob 1:18-19). His sermons dwelt heavily upon the same topics outlined by Lehi in his fatherly pronouncement, indicating that he not only took the counsel seriously, but that the Lord spoke through Lehi the messages which his son would find need of in later years. His posterity likewise remained loyal to the Nephites,\(^2\) and their apostate descendants are now being reclaimed from among the modern Lamanites (D&C 3:17). The same things hold true for Joseph's descendants.

\(^1\)President Wilford Woodruff, although himself a man of great faith, cited the fact that there were great fears in the 1870's regarding the "vanishing American": "... The Lamanites will blossom as the rose on the mountains. I am willing to say here that, though I believe this, when I see the power of the nation destroying them from the face of the earth, the fulfillment of that prophecy is perhaps harder for me to believe than any revelation of God that I ever read. It looks as though there would not be enough left to receive the Gospel; but notwithstanding this dark picture, every word that God has ever said of them will have its fulfillment, and they, by and by, will receive the Gospel. ..." Wilford Woodruff, Address delivered at Salt Lake City, January 12, 1873, Journal of Discourses, reporter David W. Evans, XV (London, England, 1873), 282.

\(^2\)Jacob 1:13; 4 Nephi 1:36-37; Mormon 1:8.
Going beyond Lehi's lifetime, subsequent effects upon his people were noted in direct and indirect references to Lehi. A later prophet named Helaman admonished his sons, Nephi and Lehi, to remember the words and righteous works of their namesakes. This they solemnly did, paralleling Lehi's comment that he had chosen the good part (cf. 2 Nephi 2:20; Helaman 5:5-8).

One other subsequent effect was somewhat less definable, but nonetheless noteworthy. Lehi's sermon in 2 Nephi chapter two was observed to be essentially a "plan of salvation" approach, with both history and doctrine woven in through the entire story from the beginning of the earth's creation to the atonement, and the resurrection of all men. Later Book of Mormon prophets used this same approach. Although it was not demonstrable that they copied Lehi, the similarity existed, nonetheless. Given the fact that Lehi was the grand patriarch of the nation, his teachings might well have been the model after which the others patterned theirs. Jacob seemed to follow this schema; Ammon, son of King Mosiah, did the same.¹

¹2 Nephi 6 to 10; Alma 18:24-39.
When Jacob during his ministry taught certain doctrines regarding chastity and monogamy, he stated that these had issued forth from the Lord through Lehi (Jacob 2:34). No word of them was found earlier on the small plates of Nephi, suggesting that any written record of the problem and the teachings must have appeared in the now-lost Book of Lehi, from the large plates of Nephi.

This was the only doctrine or teaching from Lehi which might in any way be termed irrelevant--but only from the fact that it was reported later than Lehi's lifetime, and the statement of the problem has escaped.\textsuperscript{1} Certain other evidences demonstrated, however, that the likelihood was very great that Lehi had to cope with a definite problem, or at least felt inspired through the gift of prophecy to speak out on a problem which he knew would arise. As a background circumstance, shortly before Lehi left Jerusalem the practice of plural marriage existed among evil people (2 Kings 24:9, 15). Furthermore, such evils and related whoredoms became quite proliferated during certain times of later Nephite history.\textsuperscript{2}

Aside from the fact that Lehi was a prophet, and knew of the evils of his former nation, no other qualifications were apparent regarding his ability to cope with this problem. His success in teaching this doctrine to his people was not observable. The later effect upon his son Jacob, however, was definitely visible, for he quoted the doctrine.

\textsuperscript{1}Cf. 1 Nephi 1:16-17.

SUMMARY

Lehi pioneered the way, both in leading his colony to the promised land, but also in the spiritual elevation of his disciples toward Jesus Christ. In retrospect, and bearing in mind the six minor hypotheses\(^1\) as standards of judgment, Lehi experienced twelve detailed problems relating to his ministry over temporal and spiritual matters. As contained in the account by Nephi, most of Lehi's teachings grew out of his problems with his sons. Most notable of these were his final discourse and blessing to them.

Although Lehi was certainly a man of action, little of what was found about him pertained to activities by comparison with the amount known concerning his teachings. The conclusion drawn from this was that his effectiveness arose largely from the power of the Spirit within him, moving him to eloquence and strong leadership. With the exception of the broken bow and broken faith incident, Lehi exhibited adequate beneficial qualifications to cope with the problems of his ministry. Indeed, that single, tragic incident might have worked within him toward larger ultimate success than he would have had otherwise (thinking of Alma the younger's rough times as a parallel example). The great wisdom garnered during his trials was reflected in his last discourse.

The evidence discovered suggested unequivocally that all of Lehi's teachings were relevant (directly related to his problems)

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\(^1\)See Table 1 in Chapter 1.
and supportive with regard to his assignments and goals. The slight exception noted (problem twelve) was not considered significant enough to alter this conclusion. Appendix B lists all of Lehi's emphasized teachings in order of chronological occurrence.

Lehi's effectiveness with the Jews was small, but the Lord praised his dedication. All things relating to his journey were excellent successes, the broken bow incident being the one exception. The final outcome of his lifelong labors with his "congregation," his family and kindred, approximated fifty percent success. That is to say, approximately half of them were righteous and followed Nephi, after Lehi's death, when they separated from the Lamanites (2 Nephi 5:6). In this was seen a fine parallel to the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). The results of this study indicated that Lehi had done all that the Lord expected of him as far as reclaiming his wayward sons was concerned. His lack of success was due not to his inactivity but to their unreceptivity.

Later effects were noted in all but four of his problems. His fellow prophets of later generations pointed to him as a righteous example worthy of emulation, and they also cited some of his teachings.

Nothing has been said in this chapter touching on the sixth minor hypothesis, which treats the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written. As explained in chapter one, the information on the following page, Table 3, is the best means of evaluating the evidence regarding that sixth hypothesis. As seen
in the table, the problems which produced *teachings* scored higher in terms of fulfilling more of the major purposes, than did those problems which were primarily of an historical nature. One exception to that tendency was the broken bow episode, which also touched on several purposes. It was significant to note that Lehi's teachings ranged through every one of the major purposes--some of them many times.
### Table 3
Lehi--Data Summary on Minor Hypotheses

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Calling Jerusalem to repentance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Jews mocked him, Alma 36:22 sought his life</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 456 89 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fleeing Jerusalem and inheritance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Lord delivered them; none knew 2 Nephi 5:28; Alma 9:9; Helaman 8:22; 3 Neph 5:20</td>
<td>1 6 (few)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Trying to convert his rebellious sons</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>temporary obedience, not final conversion; Lord and Nephi aided</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>123456 89 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Obtaining needed scriptures</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel murmured; Nephi went with faith</td>
<td>123 56 8 (many)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Comforting Sariah</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>comforted, converted when sons returned</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 6 8 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Reading plates of brass in Egyptian</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>read plates, prophesied</td>
<td>Mosiah 1:3-7</td>
<td>12 56 8 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sending sons for wives</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>sons went willingly; successful</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Journeying into the wilderness</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>journey long because faith grew slowly</td>
<td>Alma 9:9</td>
<td>1 6 3 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Having faith, obtaining food, after Nephi's bow broke</td>
<td>at first, no; later, yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>he murmured, then humbly renewed faith; Nephi helped him</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 6 89 11 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Sailing to the promised land</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>all sailed; later mutiny quelled by Lord</td>
<td>Helaman 6:10</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Blessing and instructing his posterity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nephites believed but rebelled</td>
<td>Jarom 9; Alma 9:13; 50:12-20; 3 Nephi 5:22; Helaman 5:5-8</td>
<td>1234567891011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Problems-goals</th>
<th>B. Were beneficial qualifications exhibited?</th>
<th>C. Were relevant teachings</th>
<th>D. Successes-responses</th>
<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. (Unstated)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Jacob 2:27-34</td>
<td>3 9 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chastity and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>monogamy</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a* See Appendix B for list of teachings, with references.

*b* For list of major purposes see p. 20.
Chapter 4

NEPHI, SON OF LEHI--SEER, HISTORIAN, RULER, AND GENERAL

The second era of Book of Mormon history commenced after the death of Lehi, the patriarch presiding over the united colony. With the flight of Nephi and his followers a new civilization began, presided over by Nephi as ruler, and by his posterity of kings (Jacob 1:9-11; Mosiah 25:13). This era began somewhere between 588 and 570 B.C. and continued until the establishment of the Nephite republic under the reign of the judges in 91 B.C. Although not truly a king, as will be shown below, Nephi functioned essentially as a king. This chapter presents findings regarding his reign and ministry, both as prophet, seer, and historian in religious affairs, and as ruler and general in civil matters.

AN OVERVIEW OF HIS LIFE

Nephi was the son of Lehi, a descendant of Manasseh the son of Joseph (1 Nephi 5:14; Alma 10:3). He was apparently born at Jerusalem (1 Nephi 1:4), but fled with his father and family while yet exceeding young, although large of stature (1 Nephi 2:16). Sometime during this period of late youth or early manhood he received a call to be a witness or prophet of Christ (1 Nephi 11:14). His ministry overlapped those of his own father and brother, Lehi
and Jacob (1 Nephi 1:18-20; 2 Nephi 2:4). His ministry continued from the valley of Lemuel through the desert to the land of Bountiful. Again, he served in the land of their first inheritance and on into the land of Nephi. His activities as the ruler over his people involved the fostering of all types of civilization developments, plus building a temple to the Lord and keeping the religious and historical records of the church and state (2 Nephi 5:12-33). In addition to these labors he led his people in battle against the invading Lamanites (Jacob 1:10; 2 Nephi 5:34). Apparently he died peacefully, having lived to be about seventy years old (Jacob 1:1, 12).¹

The analysis of Nephi's personality and teachings did not include a treatment of those teachings which were directed solely to later generations by means of his abridgment on the small plates of Nephi. Those pertained to problems after his time, and a consideration of them would go beyond the limits of this study.

With regard to analyzing Nephi's language ability in relation to each problem, examination showed that this could best be handled in the problem-assignment of making the small plates (problem 16). Since that was the last problem discovered in his direct writings, and since all of the problems were written up or described at that late date, the language patterns could only be ascribed to that one period. Therefore, no comment about his

¹Nephi was apparently in his late teens or early twenties when he left Jerusalem in 600 B.C. (cf. 1 Nephi 2:16; 4:31).
language ability appears in this chapter until the discussion of problem sixteen.

With the exception of those, two qualifying factors, the analysis of Nephi's effect and relevance is presented in accordance with the methods spelled out in chapter one of this study.

THE PROBLEMS OF FOUNDING A NATION

Seventeen major or significant problems in the life of Nephi were observed in the text of his writings and the writings of Jacob, his brother. As with the other prophets, Nephi had numerous other problems relating to his ministry, but the ones considered for the present purposes were those which were readily identifiable or stood out as his prominent concerns.

(1) Gaining a Testimony of Lehi's Words (1 Nephi 2: 16-17)

The first of Nephi's challenges or problems came in the form of needing a spiritual conviction of the truthfulness of his father's words regarding the wicked condition of Jerusalem, his visions, and the Lord's command to flee into the wilderness. He had followed his father into the wilderness, as had the rest of the family, but his older brothers Laman and Lemuel had begun to rebel. This was apparently part of the catalyst motivating Nephi to exercise his "great desires to know of the mysteries of God" (2:16).

Nephi's qualifications for obtaining the testimony he searched for apparently rested, therefore, primarily on the foundation of desire. He sought the Lord, as his father had done before
him (1:5). As the entire course of his life revealed, Nephi was not satisfied with the superficial pleasures of physical life, but yearned for the heights of spiritual joy and experience. Though reared in an environment of prosperity, as was pointed out in the chapter on Lehi, Nephi had maturity enough to seek beyond the worldliness which had so entrapped the hearts of his older brothers Laman and Lemuel (2:11; 17:21). His "exceeding youth" but his being "large in stature" suggested that he was in his youth or early manhood, a time of idealism and great transition in values. Nephi having turned to the ultimate source of truth, the Lord visited him by His Holy Spirit (2:17), giving him the testimony for which he had looked.

The fact that Nephi had been taught by his father (1:1) witnessed that he had received training in the scriptures, the foundation for Jewish schooling. As later evidences showed, Laman and Lemuel had also absorbed at least the outward coating of religiosity (17:22), but they lacked the desire to seek for truth at its source as Nephi did (15:8-11).

Having acquired a firm belief, Nephi taught Sam, his other older brother. No exact teaching methods were described, but the result was that Sam believed. As shown below in problem seven, Nephi failed in his later attempt to convince Laman and Lemuel of the truthfulness of their father's words.

The only emphasized teaching\(^1\) was that the Lord had given

\(^1\)"Emphasized teachings" as defined in *Criteria for Analyzing Data*, in chapter 1.
Nephi a witness of the truthfulness of Lehi's words.

As to successes and responses, Nephi had received the Lord's Holy Spirit, and Sam had acquired a similar belief through Nephi's words. No references were made to the writings of former prophets, and no later effects were noted in the writings of later prophets regarding this specific problem.

(2) Seeking Records of Laban
(1 Nephi 3:1, 7, 9-14)

The next problem encountered by Nephi was the assignment by the Lord for him and his brothers to obtain the record of the Jews from Laban. This, with the genealogy of their fathers, was engraved on plates of brass.

The characteristics which qualified Nephi for this task were observable in several particulars. Lehi and the entire family evidently knew something about Laban, for the older sons, in characteristic fashion, had complained that Lehi was requiring a hard thing of them (3:5). Had there been no cause for concern, when they arrived at Laban's house all four of the brothers could have calmly walked in together instead of drawing lots (3:10-11). Father Lehi himself, with his faith in the Lord, knew that it was from Laban that the Lord would have need of delivering his sons more than from the desert, which seemed to be the major fear Sariah had (5:2, 5).¹ As it turned out, Lehi was more correct, suggesting that he had known something about Laban's evil nature. The point observed was that Nephi probably shared in some of this

¹W. Cleon Skousen, Hidden Treasures from the Book of Mormon, I (Salt Lake City: W. Cleon Skousen, 1971), 41.
knowledge regarding Laban, preparing and qualifying him in a measure for the undertaking. A further aspect of "knowing the enemy" was the fact that Nephi ended up with four opponents about whom he needed to know: Laban; Zoram, the servant of Laban; and Laman and Lemuel. He knew the nature and character of his brothers from experience with them. About Zoram more is said below.

Although being the youngest of the four brothers seeking the plates (Sam being older than he also), significantly enough, in the drawing of lots Nephi was considered as being potentially a candidate to make the initial contact with Laban. His brothers thus esteemed him to be qualified for the assignment.

As to spiritual qualifications, Nephi stood foremost among his brothers in ability to cope with this challenge. The Lord had evidently prepared Nephi for this arduous test of faith (as it turned out to be) by means of his preceding communication of great promises (2:19-24). Thus, he knew the ways of the Lord, although his brothers did not (2:12). The most clear-cut evidence for Nephi's readiness for the task lay in the oft-quoted statement that he knew the Lord would prepare the way for them to fulfill his commandment (3:7). Although he was not teaching his father, Nephi used the teaching method of bearing testimony. His words brought great joy to his father (3:8). Nephi's manifestation of sorrow, when the first attempt to obtain the plates failed, showed that his heart was in the project (3:14), a necessary qualification for any success.

The foregoing paragraphs have presented findings regarding
Nephi's qualifications in character and personality, background experiences and types of revelation, action style, and teaching methods. With regard to teachings, only one was observed—Nephi's statement of faith alluded to above (3:7).

The only successes and responses noted at this stage of the effort were those shown by Nephi in exercising faith as he accepted with alacrity the call to seek the plates. Laman's solo attempt to obtain the plates failed, for Laban accused him of being a robber (1 Nephi 3:13). The remainder of the discussion on the total successes and responses for the entire project is presented step by step in the three subsequent problems, all of which related to the plate-seeking enterprise. No later effects were noted regarding these problems.

(3) Taking Initiative to Obtain Plates of Brass (1 Nephi 3:15-27; 4:1-8)

The second phase of Nephi's confrontation with the problem of seeking the plates of brass arose out of his strength of character. His determination to succeed in fulfilling the Lord's command caused him to swear with a solemn oath to his brothers that they would not go back to their father until they had finished what the Lord had commanded them (3:15). In this, he exhibited the quality of faithfulness. Further, he showed himself to be a strategist by suggesting that they use the riches their father had left behind, giving them to Laban in exchange for the plates (3:16, 24). He was willing to sell materialism for truth. In the course of persuading his brothers to make a second attempt, Nephi bore
testimony again of Lehi's call from the Lord to leave wicked Jerusalem (3:16-18).

Nephi then revealed that he had the qualification of knowledge—knowledge of the purpose for which the plates were truly needed. They were necessary to preserve the language of their fathers unto their posterity, and particularly to preserve the teachings of the prophets of God (3:19-20). Based on the value which he seemed to place on the learning he had gained from his father (1:1), Nephi felt very highly motivated to provide these teachings for his posterity. This was true particularly in the realm of his desire for spiritual learning. Indeed, through spiritual learning, by means of the revelation he had just lately received, he had knowledge that he would be a ruler and a teacher over his brethren (2:22). He knew that he could not be a teacher unless he had subject matter to teach, such as the record of the Jews. This same motivation was renewed to Nephi, strengthening his qualifications to cope with this problem, when an angel of the Lord appeared at the appropriate moment to stop Laman and Lemuel from smiting Sam and Nephi with a rod (3:29). The heavenly visitant declared that Nephi would indeed be a ruler over them because of their iniquities (3:29). The command was to go to Laban and the Lord would deliver Laban into their hands. They wanted the plates, of course, but as it turned out the plates were not obtained until Laban himself was delivered into their hands by Nephi's faith (4:1-8).

Such were the character qualifications and background experiences which Nephi had, preparing him for success in coping with
this challenge. The types of revelation evident in the text describing the problem included, as mentioned already, the appearance of an angel to rescue Nephi and Sam, and to impart encouragement to all. Further, Nephi humbly suffered himself to be led by the Spirit through the darkness of Jerusalem to the drunken form of Laban, fallen to the earth (4:6).

Though highly spiritual, Nephi's style of action was likewise most practical, as seen in his suggestion to barter riches for scriptures.

Nephi's teaching methods were likewise practical, citing the Lord's deliverance of Moses' people from the Red Sea and Pharaoh as an example of how the Lord could deal with Laban's fifty, or even ten thousand (4:1-2). He also reminded them that they had seen an angel, which they evidently had promptly forgotten (4:3). In addition to such reference to Moses, as one of the former prophets, Nephi alluded to "all the holy prophets" (3:20).

Nephi's emphasized teachings were directed straight at the problem at hand. As a means of igniting faith in the hearts of Laman and Lemuel, he told the story of Moses, spoke of the Lord's command to Lehi to leave Jerusalem, explained the urgent need for the plates of brass, and twice exhorted them to be faithful in keeping the commandments of God.

On the subject of Nephi's successes and the responses of others, his brothers followed him the first time, to barter their riches for the plates of brass. Laban robbed them and sought their lives. For this failure, Nephi and Sam received a beating (1 Nephi
3:22-29). They followed him also a second time, this time at the behest of the angel, coupled with Nephi's persuasion. On the latter occasion he went on beyond them alone and triumphed.

President George Q. Cannon made an enlightening statement about these events:

To Laman and Lemuel the possession of these plates was not worth struggling or taking any risks for; so far as they were concerned posterity could go without them. But not so with Nephi. His willingness to do as the Lord commanded, and his determination not to be baffled, even though he incurred the risk of losing his life, opened his eyes to see the importance of these records. He was a great benefactor in this respect to his posterity, and the descendants also of his brothers reaped many advantages from them. And in days yet to come, they will still prove a great blessing to them.

Nephi's faith, in its simplicity and strength, appeared to be the tool the Lord wished to employ to obtain the plates. Apparently the Lord did not want to allow mere human persuasion, nor worldly wealth to be the means of obtaining the valuable scriptures. The Lord thus used the faith of Nephi, providing a test which proved him worthy of the great ministry lying before him. The challenge trained Nephi for further effectiveness. The Lord commanded all of the brothers to go up to Jerusalem, although He knew Nephi alone could handle the assignment. The Lord evidently did this to try Laman and Lemuel, and Laban also, giving them an opportunity to exercise their agency to grow and receive blessings.

(4) Slaying Laban to Obtain Plates (1 Nephi 4:9-18)

One of the greatest problems ever faced by Nephi, a man of great goodness and love, was the next one the Lord laid at his feet. He was requested to kill Laban (4:10).

What qualifications Nephi had for such an errand were not those found among other killers. He, the record stated, had never "shed the blood of man" (4:10). He had faith, was receptive to the Spirit, and was obedient—adequate qualifications for even that task (4:6, 10, 18). The Spirit put pressure on him ("constrained him"), bringing to his mind some of his background knowledge: that he had the great promise of future seed who would be in great need of the scriptures (4:14-17). That seemed to be the argument which motivated his decision, although thoughts of Laban's robbery, attempted murder, and disobedience to the Lord also had run through his mind. The voice of the Spirit told him that the Lord slays the wicked to "bring forth his righteous purpose," (4:13) which included providing the plates of brass for Nephi's nation that they might not dwindle in unbelief.

Nephi's response to revelation, and his style of action, were observed. Being led by the Spirit (4:6), and apparently operating under this stimulus, he drew forth Laban's sword from the sheath. Evidently he did not know at first why he had pulled the sword, for when the Spirit told him why, he shrank back and desired not to slay Laban (4:9-10). He meditated; he thought on it as directed by the Spirit. After being convinced that according to the Lord's justice only good could come of it, he slew Laban by decapitation.
acting as the Lord's executioner (4:18). He thus exercised his faith in the Lord's deliverance (4:17).

As to teachings emphasized, all have been adduced above. They centered in the instructions of the Spirit to slay Laban, why the Lord slays the wicked, and why He had delivered Laban into Nephi's hands. All of them referred directly to the problem at hand.

Nephi's success in this endeavor was to obey the Spirit and slay Laban, thus accomplishing the greater purposes of the Almighty.

No teaching methods were observed, unless Nephi's self-instruction through meditation might be classed as such. The text made only one reference to a former prophet, mentioning the law of Moses (4:15).

(5) Obtaining Plates from Zoram;
Persuading Zoram to Join the Colony (1 Nephi 4:19-38; 5:20-22)

Still facing the challenge of obtaining the plates out of Laban's house, right from under the noses of his servants, Nephi acted again as directed by the Spirit. Indeed, the Holy Spirit continued with him throughout the entire episode (4:31). As will be shown, Nephi faced a second problem, namely, to persuade one of Laban's servants to become an equal member of Lehi's colony. His abilities in overcoming these hurdles were strongly indicative of the character which he manifested throughout the remainder of his problems discussed below.

As a background, Nephi had knowledge regarding Laban's role in Jerusalem, and he also knew something about the general
circumstances in Jerusalem. He was motivated by the Spirit to don Laban's clothing and armor (4:19) and go off in search of the plates and the servant who had the keys to the treasury containing the plates. He was near the house of Laban (4:7), but the record said he went specifically toward the treasury area of Laban's property (4:20), suggesting that he had some knowledge of its whereabouts. Approaching there, Nephi met the servant with the keys and "commanded him in the voice of Laban" to go into the treasury with him (4:20).

Having obtained the plates, Nephi could have simply left, presumably. His lucid mind, however, apparently perceived the problem of allowing Zoram, the servant, to remain and raise a hue and cry in Jerusalem once the body of Laban was discovered and the purloined plates connected with Lehi's family. Nephi wisely chose at that point to bid Zoram follow him (4:25). As they walked along, Zoram spoke regarding the elders of the Jews (4:22, 27), and Nephi responded as Laban would have (4:23). Some have wondered if Nephi cultivated a drunken manner of speech, easier to imitate than Laban's normal voice.1 Considering Nephi's youthfulness of voice, such a possibility seemed less likely than that he had been "blessed with a modified 'gift of tongues,'"2 as others have suggested.

Upon arriving at the hiding place of Nephi's brothers, Zoram feared for his life and began to flee (4:30). Nephi exhibited great presence of mind and quickness to act, seizing him and holding

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1Skousen, p. 37.

2Eldin Ricks, Book of Mormon Commentary, I ([Salt Lake City]: Deseret News Press, 1951), 72.
him in an ineluctable grasp. Though Nephi was large, he humbly acknowledged the Lord's added strength at that juncture (4:31). Nephi was a man of his word, as seen in the solemn oath he used to pacify Zoram into hearkening to his words, promising him he would not kill him if he would listen (4:32). With a second oath (4:33) he promised Zoram that he would be a free man with equal status in the colony. Dr. Nibley has shown, through extensive ancient documentation, that "... the only way that Nephi could possibly have pacified the struggling Zoram in an instant was to utter the one oath that no man would dream of breaking, the most solemn of all oaths to the Semite ... ."¹ That oath was "as the Lord liveth, and as I live" (4:32). Nephi's ability to cope with this problem therefore resulted in part from his acquaintance with the customs of his time. The fact could not be ignored, however, that Nephi evidently knew something of Zoram's character and good qualities (as were abundantly shown during their journey—2 Nephi 1:30-32), for he sought to persuade him with the argument that the Lord had commanded the venture. That would have been a strange thing for him to say to a wicked man, perhaps, but Zoram was not of the same dye as his master, Laban. Furthermore, Nephi showed that he was concerned about Zoram's welfare, promising him that he would be a free man. Nephi's boldness and courage were balanced by his wisdom and inspiration in appealing to those things which finally caused Zoram to acquiesce, making an oath that he

would go with Nephi and his family (4:35).

Nephi's qualifications, exemplified above, were thus successful in aiding him to impersonate Laban, obtain the plates, lure Zoram outside the city walls, and finally persuade him to join the Lord's caravan. Matters were so successful that Mormon could later report that no one remaining in Jerusalem knew of their departure (3 Nephi 5:20). Nephi himself later stated that the colony valued the plates very highly because they would help preserve the commandments of God unto their children (5:21).

Regarding his major qualification, that of faith, a summary of findings in this problem, and the preceding three problems related to obtaining the plates of brass, revealed that Nephi did not function under blind faith, as some might be tempted to term it. His faith included the desire to be obedient, whereupon he was obedient to the extent of his power. The Lord's power could then be added. Nephi's faith was not blind, for he delighted in obeying the Lord simply to be obedient to a righteous request. He knew enough of the Lord to know that he need not question the motive. His joy was increased, later, when the Lord complimented him by sharing with him the knowledge of why it was good to do as He had requested. That made him more a partner or heir rather than a servant. Until he was ready for the burden of responsibility which the knowledge brought, Nephi was better off developing his faith. Having then proven himself, he became worthy of the blessing. This explains why Nephi's true faith was not blind, but could still be unquestioning. When confronting Zoram, or when challenged by his rebellious
brothers. Nephi apparently had faith enough to open his mouth and let the Spirit fill it with words, judging from a statement by the Lord in modern times: 1

The difficult test of obtaining the plates of brass through faith, not knowing fully the need for them, resulted in Nephi's receiving a sure "witness" after the trial of his faith (Ether 12:6). Shortly thereafter he obtained great knowledge through the vision of the future of his people (1 Nephi 11 to 14). What a clarification that was to him of how important the plates of brass were going to be.

(6) Persuading Ishmael's Family to Join (1 Nephi 7:3-5)

Nephi's labors in obtaining the plates were scarcely over when the Lord in his farsighted wisdom revealed to Lehi the need of wives for his sons. Nephi's assignment, with his brothers, was to return to Jerusalem to persuade Ishmael and his family to join the Lehi colony.

The major qualification demonstrated in this episode was the presence of the Spirit of the Lord to soften Ishmael's heart that he might view the enterprise with favor (7:4-5). Although Nephi reported that all of them "did speak unto him the words of the Lord" (7:4), Nephi had the greatest faith among the brothers and very probably had much to do by way of persuading Ishmael that it was the Lord's doing. The fact that the number of marriageable

1The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 33:8, hereafter cited as D&C.
men now equaled the number of Ishamel's daughters (thanks to the addition of Zoram) was also a factor in their favor. The disappearance of Zoram and the lack of anyone else who knew the circumstances of Laban's death made it safe to visit Ishmael.

All results of the enterprise were apparently favorable in the end, although a rebellion occurred on the return trip home to the valley of Lemuel. This is discussed in the next problem. No teachings were emphasized in this problem. Likewise, there were no references to former prophets, nor later effects of the problem directly referred to in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.


Being like his father Lehi in many ways, Nephi likewise shared with him the problem of the rebellions instigated by Laman and Lemuel. Although this type of challenge was found reported in several portions of Nephi's writings, it is considered here under one heading for convenience of analysis.

This problem or set of similar problems evidently taxed Nephi's strength and character more than any other one (2 Nephi 4:13, 27-29). His qualifications for meeting the challenge were nonetheless visible throughout the record. Respecting his character and personality traits there was abundant evidence: He was diligent in seeking the Lord, with lowliness of heart, in behalf of his

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1 Ricks, pp. 87-88.  
2 Cannon, pp. 33-35.
brethren (1 Nephi 2:18-19; 2 Nephi 4:35; 5:1). Nephi was always concerned for their eternal welfare, seeking to teach them the principles which would lead them to the Lord (1 Nephi 17:19, 47-48). His faith and worthiness were such as to elicit the help of an angel in time of difficulty (1 Nephi 3:29). In addition to that, he was determined to do the will of the Lord, being true to his convictions in spite of their opposition (1 Nephi 4:1-4).

Other qualities noted were his possession of the influence of the Holy Spirit (1 Nephi 7:15), and his reverence before the Lord, crediting Him with the food the colony received (1 Nephi 16:39). His humility was particularly manifest when his brothers desired to bow down and worship him when he shocked them by the power of the Almighty (1 Nephi 17:55). Had Nephi wanted to be their king, to dominate them (as they often claimed), he would surely not have forbidden such honors. Instead he reminded them that he was their younger brother, forbidding their worship of him but urging them to worship God. On another occasion he lovingly and frankly forgave them for their attempted murder (1 Nephi 7:21).

When faced with the most dire persecutions at the hands of his brothers, Nephi did not murmur, as they had done under far less stress (1 Nephi 18:16). Rather, he looked to God for aid. This attribute was notably evident in the beautiful expression referred to sometimes as the "psalm of Nephi" (2 Nephi 4:15-35). There, he declared his love of God and the scriptures, acknowledged his own weaknesses—being angry at his enemies and slackening his efforts when afflicted--(2 Nephi 4:13, 27-29), and enunciated his gratitude
for the Lord's blessings. Saved by the Lord five times from being murdered,\(^1\) Nephi knew in whom he trusted (2 Nephi 4:35).

Some further personality traits came to light in Nephi's statement that he and the Nephites lived "after the manner of happiness" after departing from his contentious brethren. Despite his positive attitude and great faith prior to that time, his life had been frequently filled with great sorrow for the hardness of their hearts (1 Nephi 7:8), and with fears that his brothers were to be cast off eternally.\(^2\) In all of this he had great pain and anguish, at one time even fearing exceedingly that the Lord would smite the whole colony because of the rudeness of Laman and Lemuel and their followers (1 Nephi 18:9). Although he respected their seniority, he knew that he needed to set a good example for them (1 Nephi 7:8). Furthermore, having seen the future in vision, he felt impelled to save his brothers and their posterity from the horrible fate foreshadowed in the revelation. At times he felt that they had overcome their murmuring (1 Nephi 17:2), but his sorrow returned with redoubled force when they reverted back to that trait (17:47).

The background experiences strengthening Nephi for the labor with his brothers were primarily the continual revelations which he received. These increased, and the manifestations of the Lord's power through Nephi increased, in direct proportion to the intractability of Laman and Lemuel. The obtaining of his personal testimony


of Lehi's calling led directly to the first confrontation with his brothers' hardheartedness. His sole desire was to share his testimony, for he never pretended to be the one to receive revelation for them, his older brothers. The first announcement to his brothers that Nephi would rule over them came not from him but from an angel (1 Nephi 3:29). Following Lehi's death Nephi was the Lord's prophet and spoke as such to his brothers, not counseling them merely from his position as a brother. Lehi had in fact left his blessing upon the older sons contingent upon their obedience to Nephi's teachings (2 Nephi 1:28-29), so Nephi was not usurping authority. Since they failed to sustain the Lord's prophet, the Church was taken from among the Lamanites, and the prophet also (2 Nephi 5:5-7). Before that fateful day, however, the Lord had progressively shown forth his power through Nephi by means of inspired words, then the appearance of an angel, and strength to break bands. Next came a manifestation of the Lord's own voice, followed by His giving Nephi power to confound them and later to shock them, and a storm at sea which threatened their lives, after which Nephi's prayer was heard and the Liahona worked again. Finally, when they continued to rebel, nothing remained but to remove the prophet and curse his brothers (2 Nephi 5:19-25). Nephi was inspired to leave, taking with him the Liahona, the sword of Laban, the plates of brass, and his own large plates (2 Nephi 5:12-14, 29).

Looking specifically at Nephi's teachings methods, and the manner in which he approached his rebellious brothers, the record showed that he did so with soberness (1 Nephi 18:10). He was direct
in his entreaties, but not authoritarian (1 Nephi 7:8-15). On one occasion he first reminded them of their sins, then taught them doctrines, prophesied, warned, and concluded by exhorting them to pray (1 Nephi 7:6-21). At another time he chose the reverse route: reminded them of the scriptures they knew (at least in their ears, if not their hearts), bore testimony of the destructions of the Jews, plainly described their murderous hearts, and confounded them in the name of the Lord (1 Nephi 17:17-55). In connection with his teaching methods were striking references to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Jeremiah. All of these were certainly relevant to Laman and Lemuel, who were of the house of Israel and knew the scriptures. Nephi's words to his brothers were not mere quarreling, but always contained a message regarding the Lord, and an exhortation to do well.

Obtaining any actual labor out of the brothers required a great effort: fifteen out of the twenty-five emphasized teachings contained in the passages dealing with the brothers' rebellions were found in the rebellion at the shipyard. Nephi's sermon there was the lengthiest of any of his admonitions to his brothers, and also apparently the last one they hearkened to in a time of anger. The teachings, most of which have been alluded to above, were clearly relevant to the problems Nephi faced.

Nephi's successes with his brothers were mostly good in the individual episodes, but in the end they willfully rebelled. In this he shared the sorrow of Lehi. In brief summary, his success was negligible when first bearing them his testimony. When seeking
the plates of brass, the angel intervened and the brothers followed Nephi, though still wroth. With the help of the Spirit, and the help of others in the party, Nephi was successful in quelling the rebellion which ensued while returning to camp with Ishmael's family. At the death of Ishmael the Lord chastened the rebels by his own voice, causing them to repent. Nephi, with the power of the Lord, was successful in the shipyard in stopping their murmuring, bringing them to humility, and persuading them to labor with him on the ship. On board ship, Nephi's words were totally rejected, and the storm from the Lord was necessary to quiet the intransigents. Finally, after the death of Lehi, the brothers were irreconcilable by words, forcing Nephi to flee. The Lord would not suffer His works and His prophet to be destroyed, even if the Lamanites had to be cut off from His presence.

The tragic later effect of this entire problem, as noted by the writers later on in the Book of Mormon, was that the Lamanites were taught an eternal hatred of the children of Nephi (Mosiah 10: 17; 4 Nephi 1:39). This, coupled with their long list of grievances against Lehi and Nephi, came to be known in later times as "the traditions of the Lamanites," or "the traditions of the fathers" (Mosiah 10:12-17), as opposed to the traditions of the Nephites (e.g., Alma 9:9-13).

Gaining Personal View of Lehi's Vision (1 Nephi 10: 17-22; 11:1)

Turning to one of the most edifying problems in Nephi's ministry, the next challenge facing the young man was to obtain
spiritual insight regarding the vision of the tree of life which his father had dreamed or seen. Nephi took greater delight in finding the deeper joy of thrilling spiritual experiences than in being satisfied with mere physical pleasures, as were Laman and Lemuel (1 Nephi 17:21). He sought for knowledge of the truth directly from the source--the Lord (10:17). To this young man--not even married--the Lord vouchsafed essentially the same great vision his father had seen, and perhaps even more (14:28-29). It included views of the future (14:18-28) to be classed with the "vision of all" had earlier by the brother of Jared (Ether 3:25), and the prophecy of Adam regarding all his future posterity (D&C 107:56). Enoch, Moses, John the apostle, and perhaps others saw similar visions.\footnote{The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Moses 7:67; 1:8; hereafter cited as P. of G. P.; see also 1 Nephi 14:24-27.}

The question is, how did Nephi qualify for receiving such a great blessing; how did he cope with the challenge of preparing himself for that type of a reward. The fact was mentioned above that part of the requirements were satisfied, apparently, by such efforts of faith as those he put forth to obtain the plates of brass. His concern to save his brothers must likewise have been a factor. The climax to it all, however, was his desire to know, coupled with his belief that the Lord could make things known to him, and his pondering (prayer being probably involved) these things in his heart (1 Nephi 11:1). Nephi sought to the Lord, whereas Laman and Lemuel
had only been intrigued enough about the symbols of their father's dream to reason and dispute over them. ¹ Having had prior revelations, Nephi was now prepared for an even grander opportunity. In addition to viewing the vision, Nephi received authority from the Holy Spirit to speak of it in his record (1 Nephi 10:22).

The type of experience Nephi had, qualified him to be a witness for Jesus Christ, for he saw in vision His life and ministry among the Jews and later among the Nephites. In addition to those views, and the vision of the future of his people down to the end of time, he was privileged to talk with an angel, and also apparently to speak with the third personage in the Godhead, the Holy Ghost. ² These beings gave him the interpretation of the dream which his father had seen, which he later expounded to his brothers (15:21-36).

Aside from the problem mentioned herein (the gaining of a testimony of Lehi's vision), no other problem in Nephi's lifetime was mentioned in connection with the emphasized teachings contained in the vision, except for Nephi's brief explanation of some of the doctrines to Laman and Lemuel, as discussed in the succeeding problem (number nine). Therefore, since those teachings were included in the small plates of Nephi for the instruction of Nephi's posterity,


and for modern times, but not as a means of coping with a stated problem in his lifetime, they are not treated in this study.

In conclusion, Nephi's success in seeking a personal knowledge of his father's vision resulted in the Lord's responding to his desire and granting him a comparable manifestation. Although his father's experience was recorded in greater detail on the large plates (1 Nephi 8:29-30, 36; 9:1-2; 19:1) than was Nephi's abridged version of it in 1 Nephi chapter 8, Nephi's vision of the same things excelled in terms of plain interpretations of the symbols of his father's dream. In addition, Nephi apparently saw a life-like presentation of future events, whereas Lehi seemingly saw them only in abstract, allegorical form.

No references to former prophets were noticed in the text of this problem, nor were there later effects visible in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets regarding the problem.

*(9) Expounding Lehi's Teachings To Brothers* *(1 Nephi 15:1 to 16:5)*

Of all the problems Nephi faced, the responsibility of teaching and expounding the doctrines of the gospel was one for which he was perhaps most qualified. Returning from his vision on the mountain, Nephi was confronted with the need of quieting a dispute among his brothers respecting Lehi's teachings. He took the opportunity of teaching them, with gratifying results, as seen below.

Nephi came to the challenge with a summation of character qualities which have been described earlier. In addition he evidenced grief at the hardheartedness of his brothers, being overcome
in his feelings because of having seen the fall of his people at the hands of their apostate posterity (15:4-5; cf. 2 Nephi 26:7). Nonetheless, he summoned up the strength of love in his heart and began diligently to exhort them and teach them. He did not give way to the temptation to revile them for being so evil as to create a progeny who would destroy his own descendants.

The manner in which he approached his brothers, and his methods of teaching, were noteworthy. Only at one point did the text allude to his saying that an angel had explained these things to him (15:29), and the fact was not clear whether he said that to his brothers, or merely included it as an explanatory note for the reader of the small plates. In other words, he was not seeking to be authoritarian. He first asked them the cause of their disputation (15:6), and then proceeded to exhort them with all the energy of his soul, with all the faculties he possessed (15:29). He was evidently seeking to forestall the tragedy which he had seen in vision. His teaching was followed by preaching, or a challenge admonishing his hearers to do something in accord with his message.¹

By means of answering their direct questions he explained Lehi's teachings, and went on to add his own testimony of those things. Most explicitly and plainly he told them they must stand before God to be judged and would be in hell forever if they remained filthy, hardhearted, and unrepentant, and if they did not keep the commandments of the Lord (15:32-36; 16:1-4).

¹Skousen, p. 84.
In the course of his teachings he referred to two former prophets, Abraham and Isaiah, in explanation of Lehi's teachings regarding the covenants of the Lord with Israel (15:18, 20). Nephi's emphasized teachings were all directed to answering the questions of his brothers, particularly about Lehi's dream of the tree of life and his later teachings likening Israel to an olive tree. The final portion of his teachings consisted of his own testimony and warnings regarding the judgments of God, the filthiness of hell, and the fact that the truth hurts only the wicked.

Nephi's success in this venture was perhaps greater than on any other occasion of teaching his brothers. The first change in them was evident when they were pacified and humbled by his words while they were in the midst of their disputation. Secondly, they felt singed by his hard teachings about their being wicked and having to stand judgment. Finally, they humbled themselves before the Lord to the extent that Nephi had "joy and great hopes of them, that they would walk in the paths of righteousness" (16:5).

No later references to this problem were noted in the writings of later prophets in the Book of Mormon.

(10) Providing Spiritual and Physical Food for Colony after His Bow Broke (1 Nephi 16:18-19, 21-24, 28-33)

One of the most frequently cited problems in Nephi's life was the breaking of his fine, steel bow, which resulted in near-starvation for the colony. His brothers' bows were apparently worn-out (1 Nephi 16:21). The greatest crisis arose, however, over
the fact that the entire colony, including Lehi, began murmuring against the Lord. Nephi was apparently the only exception to this, although he had suffered as the others had (16:21).

Nephi's almost perfect capacity for not murmuring when under stress manifested itself on this occasion. This, and his great faith in the Lord, led him to speak with all the energy of his soul to his brothers and the sons of Ishmael, who had begun to "murmur exceedingly" (16:20, 24). Always the teacher, he was diligent in seeking to convert others to trust in the Lord.

A further qualification of inestimable value was his respect for his father. He exemplified the teaching which he later directed to his repentant brothers: "... honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee" (1 Nephi 17:55). Although his father had been murmuring, Nephi spoke only to his brothers (16:22). Furthermore, after fabricating a new bow, he went to his father to ask where he should seek game. "Lehi was still his leader," declared George Q. Cannon, "and he looked up to and honored him. Yet Lehi must have heard what he said to his brethren, and his remarks must have had their effect upon him."¹

Exhibiting initiative and resourcefulness, Nephi had made a new bow out of wood. Dr. Nibley has pointed out that this was no mean feat, and that the Lord had led them to a site, unique in all of ancient Arabia, where bow-quality wood was available.²

¹Cannon, p. 54. ²Nibley, pp. 187-88.
Nephi's ability as a hunter was also evident from the fact that he had brought a metal bow from home; his use of that difficult weapon suggested that he had had extensive hunting experience.¹

The results of all Nephi's endeavors were that his family humbled themselves (16:24), Lehi petitioned the Lord for direction, and the Lord's voice came to Lehi (16:25). In this the Lord honored Lehi as the leader of the colony, but He also chastened him severely. Upon the Liahona, the Lord then wrote chastening words for all the murmurers, plus directions for finding wild game (16:27, 30). Armed with only one arrow (a test of faith itself) and with his sling, Nephi succeeded in obtaining food for the colony.

Significant later effects of this incident were observed in the last sermon by Lehi, where he paid tribute to his son for saving them from starvation in the desert (2 Nephi 1:24). Of all Nephi's efforts, Lehi appeared to have remembered that one the most, perhaps because the son had helped his father's faltering faith as well as provided physical food. A yet later account by Zeniff recorded that Nephi "took the lead of their journey in the wilderness" (Mosiah 10:13). This seemingly referred to the broken bow incident specifically, but possibly also to his efforts in solving other problems.

The only emphasized teachings observed in this problem related to a later generation, via Nephi's abridgment. As such they extended beyond the limits of this study. No references to former

¹Nibley, pp. 61-62.
prophets were observed.

(11) Building a Ship of Inspired Design (1 Nephi 17:7-11, 15-16; 18:1-4)

The colony having arrived at the seacoast, the Lord bade Nephi come up into a mountain, where he received the assignment to build an ocean-going vessel to carry the entire group to the promised land (17:7-8). As President Joseph Fielding Smith observed, "the reason this call came to Nephi was that his older brothers were rebellious and lacked the necessary faith to do such a mighty work." Lehi was apparently too aged to lead the way in such manual labor (1 Nephi 18:17).

Nephi's qualifications for that mighty work rested upon his great faith that God was able to do all things for him who did his all. In addition to the physical effort on the ship, Nephi went frequently unto the Lord in prayer and received knowledge of great things (18:3). He manifested faith and resourcefulness in thinking and action, as seen in the first comment made after the Lord told him of the assignment: "Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools . . ." (17:9). Although he had never constructed a ship, his words reflected not

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2. In verse 8 the Lord said "I shall show thee" how to construct a ship, whereas in the next verse Nephi said He had "shown" him how to do it. This seemed to be evidence of an abridging of the account, with the description of the actual "showing" being omitted.
doubt, but a desire to be about the work. His initiative in realizing the need for tools, and asking the Lord not for the tools themselves but merely for knowledge of an ore bed, might be compared with the faith of the brother of Jared, another Book of Mormon prophet, who worked to prepare some special stones before asking the Lord to illumine them (Ether 3:1-6).

Either by revelation or by experience Nephi had some knowledge of metallurgy—he had indeed known enough about metal to appreciate or evaluate "pure gold" and "precious steel" (1 Nephi 4:9), as well as "fine brass" (1 Nephi 16:10). He likewise had a metal bow. His brothers did not challenge his ability to make a bellows, mine ore, or manufacture tools. Only when they saw that he was "about to build a ship" did they call him a fool (17:17).

The revelations to Nephi have already been mentioned. At some point, however, there must have been a revelation to Lehi indicating that the promised land lay across the ocean. Nephi was given the assignment to build the ship, but it would not have been his right to receive revelation for the entire party regarding their destination. That right still belonged to Lehi as their patriarch. Such a revelation would have been recorded on the large plates, though conspicuously absent on the small plates.

Nephi's success in his shipwrighting experience was testified to by his erstwhile rebellious brothers, who acclaimed the workmanship to be "exceeding fine" (18:4) and humbled themselves

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1Nibley, p. 37.
before the Lord.

The only teachings evolving from this problem (other than those treated under the heading of his brothers' rebellion) were directed to later generations. No references to former prophets were observed, and likewise no statements in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets alluded directly to this problem.

**(12) Making Large Plates for Sacred and Secular History**

(1 Nephi 19:1-2, 4)

Nephi had a profound reverence for sacred writings (19:6), a quality befitting his position as record keeper, his next assignment. Shortly after Nephi arrived in the promised land, the Lord commanded him to make plates of ore. Whether they were of gold, silver, copper, or some other metal or alloy was not discernible. Upon the plates Nephi was to inscribe the records of his people.

Little knowledge was available regarding Nephi's prior efforts at record keeping. Evidently he had kept some record of his own prophecies, many of which he now transferred to the more permanent medium of metal plates (19:1).

On his new plates he engraved the following four things (19:1):

1. the record of his father,
2. their journeyings in the wilderness,
3. the prophecies of his father, and
4. many of his own prophecies.

Upon the plates he gave the greater account of the history
of his people, including besides sacred things such matters as the wars and contentions of his people (19:4). He commanded his posterity to use those plates for such purposes, reserving the small plates (as will be discussed in problem sixteen) for the spiritual affairs alone.

This suggested a possible reason for Mormon's inclusion of such large sections dealing with wars. No mention was made of giving a thorough account of politics, science, literature, the arts, or of any other branch of human endeavor such as engineering or ship building. The main purpose of both the plates was to detail the spiritual affairs and the judgments or destructions which came upon the people (1 Nephi 19:4; cf. D&C 20:9). In other words, aside from the doctrines and other edifying spiritual matters, the Lord apparently felt that the most important portion of the Book of Mormon would be the account of the contentions and wars and destructions. He evidently did this, as Moroni so poignantly said, "... that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been" (Mormon 9:31).

Fortunately the Lord had not required Nephi to carry heavy plates with him throughout his journey, nor to make them until he was in a place where ore was in abundance (1 Nephi 18:25). The plates were henceforth to be passed on through the reign of the kings down to King Benjamin, and from him down through the generations of record keepers until they reached Mormon (Words of Mormon 10-11). Nephi's efforts were a success.

No statements regarding former prophets were located in
this problem, and no teachings were emphasized. As to later effects
of this problem, none were noted in the writings of subsequent Book
of Mormon prophets.

(13) Teaching His Brethren to
Believe in the Lord Their
Redeemer (1 Nephi 19:22-24;
20:1 to 22:3)

On or near the occasion of Lehi's final blessings upon his
family, Nephi had the opportunity of teaching his brethren under
peaceful circumstances. This challenge was one which he welcomed.
His teachings appeared to be directed to everyone in the colony,
but particularly to Laman and Lemuel (1 Nephi 22:1).

Nephi's qualifications as a teacher of doctrine have been
presented in former problems. Suffice it to say here that he had
the gift of prophecy, had had revelations, and knew and understood
the manner of writing among the Jewish prophets from having lived
in Jerusalem.¹ He was thus able to apply the writings of Isaiah to
his own times, and expound Isaiah's teachings to his brethren. He
was filled with the Spirit of the Lord and spoke very authoritatively
(22:18, 21, 27).

Nephi's teaching methods on this occasion were noteworthy.
He read many things from the plates of brass, including things from
the book of Moses (19:23). His objective being to persuade his
brethren to believe in "the Lord their Redeemer" (19:23), Nephi read

¹Cf. Nephi's keys for understanding Jewish prophecies--
to them from the writings of Isaiah. His excitement over Isaiah was found to be more understandable when considering that Isaiah had lived just one hundred years before Nephi's time, his book being the last, or nearly the last one before the few, sad writings of Jeremiah which Nephi knew were strongly directed to the wicked at Jerusalem.¹

Nephi's quoting of Isaiah served as a second witness for the Bible, thus contributing toward fulfilling one of the major purposes of the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 13:40; Mormon 7:9; D&C 20:11). In addition, Nephi's method was to liken, or apply, Isaiah's writings to his own people (19:23). He evidently felt a close kinship with Isaiah and his message for the Lehi colony, for Isaiah had apparently seen in vision (e.g. Isaiah 48; cf. 1 Nephi 20) many of the things which Nephi himself saw relative to the future state of his people and the entire house of Israel.² This evidently qualified Nephi to write down "the most authoritative commentary in existence on some of the difficult chapters in Isaiah."³

The emphasized teachings in Nephi's sermon dwelt primarily on explaining the passages of Isaiah which he had quoted, applying them to his people in the future, and giving explanations which evidently he had clearly seen during his great vision. Since the teachings of Isaiah and other Biblical prophets were not included

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¹Other books, such as Zenos and Zenoch, might have followed Isaiah on the plates of brass, whereas Jeremiah does in the Bible. ⁴
within the parameters of this study, they do not appear in Appendix C. Nephi's explanations of Isaiah are listed there, however.

Nephi's comment that he "did teach my brethren these things" (19:22) had reference to the teachings on the plates of brass (19:21). He then went on to explain that he specifically chose the teachings of Isaiah from those plates, to read them to his people (19:22). "These things" did not refer back to the teachings in 19:6-21, which evidently originated at the time of making the small plates.¹

The clearest evidence that Nephi's teachings were relevant for his audience was his own statement to that effect (19:24). Since Isaiah spoke to all of Israel, Nephi's statement must be considered valid if the claimed origin of Lehi's people is correct.

The effectiveness of the sermon was measured in part by the fact that Nephi's brethren were stimulated enough by the reading to come forward afterward to ask questions (22:1). Later, Lehi complimented his son, indicating his high esteem for him and admonishing the others in the colony to hearken to Nephi's voice (2 Nephi 1:28).

(14) Establishing Nephite Civilization in New Land of Nephi
(2 Nephi 5:8-29; Alma 3:14-17)

Following the death of Lehi, the anger of Laman and his fellows increased against Nephi and the believers in Christ. The tension grew so great that the disloyal opposition party sought to overthrow

¹19:18 showed the earlier passages were "written" to his people, not spoken to them in the sermon.
their ruler and assassinate their prophet, namely, Nephi (2 Nephi 5:3-4, 19). As mentioned in problem seven above, the Lord inspired Nephi to flee with his people to a new land, there to build a new civilization based on righteousness. The move evidently took them northward, for in later times that was where they were in relation to the Lamanites. The problem which then faced Nephi was to lead his people in the development of the type of civilization desired by the Lord when He had called them as colonists to re-populate the promised land (cf. Ether 13:20-21).

The foremost qualification Nephi possessed to be the leader of his people was the calling which he had received from the Lord to be their ruler and teacher (1 Nephi 2:22). Added to this was Lehi's final admonition to his colony, urging them to accept Nephi as their leader (2 Nephi 1:28). When the Lamanites rejected the Lord and his prophet, Nephi sorrowfully recorded the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Lamanites would be cut off from the Lord's presence (2 Nephi 5:20). Before that happened, however, the prophecy had been fulfilled that Nephi would be their ruler and teacher (5:19). Nephi's character was observed in this humble acknowledgment that the Lord's word had been accomplished. He further noted that a mark came upon the Lamanites as a token of the curse of being cut off from the presence of the Lord (2 Nephi 5:21-25). The mark was

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1 Cannon, pp. 123-124.

2 B. H. Roberts, New Witnesses for God, II (Salt Lake City: The Deseret Book Company, 1950, 187-88.)
a skin of blackness.¹

Nephi's generous personality was such that he desired to serve his people without being officially designated as their king (2 Nephi 5:18). Nonetheless, his people looked upon him as their king or their protector (6:2).² He was indeed their "ruler," as the word "reign" in the heading to First Nephi and 1 Nephi 10:1 indicated, but examination showed that the term "reign" does not mandatorily carry with it the connotation of a rule by a king. Nephi evidently did not favor the establishment, during his time or later times, of that kind of government, but he apparently yielded to the desires of his people in the same way the brother of Jared had done (Ether 6:22-24).³ The same sort of captivity resulted also, as later results showed (cf. Ether 7:5; Mosiah 19:1-29).⁴

¹Alma 3:14-17 renders a slightly different version of Nephi's words, indicating they were evidently taken from the large plates. The apostate Nephites were cursed even more after 385 A.D. (1 Nephi 12:22-23; cf. Mormon 5:15).

²If he truly had been their king there would have been no need to add "or a protector" as a modifier.

³Roberts, p. 240. Nephi was not anointed as a king as was his successor who began the "reigns of the kings" (Jacob 1:9). The carrying on of his name ("second Nephi, third Nephi"--Jacob 1:11) did not come from his being king, but out of love and remembrance of him (1:10-11). Also, the fact that "reign" appeared in the heading to First Nephi, where he was already a leader and teacher but definitely not a king, suggested that his role in Second Nephi had not changed materially.

⁴King Mosiah might well have been influenced by the concept in Ether 6:23 and the experience of Noah's people, in his decision to inaugurate a republic governed by judges.
Being both prophet and civil ruler, as well as historian and general or military leader (Jacob 1:10), Nephi resembled Benjamin, Alma the son of Alma, and Mormon. In all of these capacities he governed by virtue of his people's willingness to follow the Lord's prophet, for they believed in "the warnings and revelations of God" (2 Nephi 5:6). As mentioned before, they finally had arrived at a state of happiness (2 Nephi 5:27). Nephi's prior lack of success with his brothers was overshadowed by the great accomplishments of his little flock. The pattern of the Lord in calling His greatest prophets at the beginning of a dispensation, when few members of his church are present, seemed at least in Nephi's case to be due to the need of laying a foundation of doctrine, of accomplishing great works of transportation by faith, and, according to Latter-day Saint teachings, of serving in the spirit world as the presiding authority over the work among all his posterity who would enter that realm after their death.¹ Thus, Nephi would be doing a great missionary work among his people there, though not able to influence many here.

Nephi's activities as ruler, after getting the first crops in, were first to prepare weapons, including swords patterned after the sword of Laban (2 Nephi 5:14).² From background experiences


²That same remarkable sword was used in actual battle well over 300 years later! (Words of Mormon 13.) The last notice of it in the Book of Mormon was Mosiah 1:16. It was preserved by the Lord, mentioned in modern times in D&C 17:1, and seen by Joseph Smith and others.
he knew the hatred of the Lamanites for him, his children, and his people (5:14). Apparently during his lifetime he had need of wielding the sword of Laban in defense of his people (2 Nephi 5:34; Jacob 1:10). How amazing it was to note that Nephi and later warrior-prophets, such as Benjamin, Alma the younger, Helaman, Captain Moroni, Mormon, and Moroni, were spiritual giants although constantly beset with the problem of shedding blood. Their stature spiritually apparently arose from self-control, true love and caring, and absence of bloodthirstiness.

Some have stated that the ability to lead and preside over the Church arose not only from inspiration, but logically also from his being acquainted with the church that existed in Jerusalem before he departed.¹ As part of his duties in both church and state, Nephi kept the records of his people upon the plates which he himself had manufactured (2 Nephi 5:12, 29-33).

Further efforts to lead the Church involved the building of a temple, patterned after the temple of Solomon, with exceedingly fine workmanship, but not so ornate (2 Nephi 5:16). This was done in less than eighteen years after their arrival in the promised land. Nephi and his people kept the law of Moses, yet looked forward to Christ (2 Nephi 25:24). By constant prayer for them, having charity in his heart and tears in his eyes, he kept them in the path of righteousness and happiness (2 Nephi 33:3-4). This same

feeling of charity he extended to include both the Jews and the Gentiles (33:7-9). The extent of his priesthood power and authority was so great as to include the sealing power (2 Nephi 33:15). He likewise ordained officers in the church, calling his brothers Jacob and Joseph as priests and teachers (2 Nephi 5:26).

As a civil ruler Nephi exhibited exceptional diligence and wisdom. George Reynolds observed that "nothing would be so dangerous to their spiritual welfare, as well as to their health, as to permit them to spend their days in idleness. He, therefore, taught them many kinds of work." Reynolds noted that this was an excellent substitute for the worldly amusements which they lacked in the new land. Nephi's mechanical training under the Lord's hand, while building the ship, now served them to good advantage. "So far as his influence and teachings went among the people, they were free and the country was a land of liberty unto them."

Nephi's efforts in teaching his people were not only by precept but by example, as seen in the passages relating to this problem. His teachings were thus superbly relevant to their problems. He also specifically stated that he did not teach his people

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1Sidney B. Sperry, "Ancient Temples and Their Functions," The Ensign of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, II (January, 1972), 72.


4Cannon, p. 167.
many things regarding the Jews and their manner of living or writing (2 Nephi 25:1-2, 6). This extended even to adopting a new monetary and weights and measures system (Alma 11:4). Nonetheless he had charity for the Jews.

In all of his endeavors in the new land named after him, Nephi was evidently very successful. The one slight exception to this might be his failure to dissuade his people from desiring a king during his lifetime or thereafter. Quite clearly he did not desire that they have one (2 Nephi 5:18).

A later prophet's evaluation of Nephi's success was that his people were "... easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God, and slow to be led to do iniquity; and they were quick to hearken unto the words of the Lord" (Helaman 7:7-9; cf. 2 Nephi 5:27). Other later influences included the fact that the righteous were always known by his name, and the language they spoke even became known as the language of Nephi (Mosiah 24:4). This was later taught to the Lamanites, over 425 years after the two nations had divided, developing different languages. The Lamanites had apparently even lost their ability to write. Prophets were named after him (Helaman 5:4-6), other prophets quoted his words (Alma 3:14-17), and the authority and influence of his priesthood was carried on (Jacob 1:18).

\[1\] Nibley, p. 110.
Making Abridgment of Lehi's Record (1 Nephi 1:16-17, 20; 2:11-13)

Continuing to honor his father, Nephi included an abridgment of Lehi's record as the first portion of a new set of small plates which the Lord commanded him to make (2 Nephi 5:30-33). Having engraved Lehi's complete record on the large plates of Nephi (1 Nephi 19:1-2), he only touched briefly on the historical portion of Lehi's record up to the point of the beginning of his own record. As will be shown in the next problem, which treats the total issue of making the small plates of Nephi, the contents were to be spiritual in nature. Consequently, that which Nephi chose from his father's record focused primarily on the doctrinal teachings of greatest importance. Beginning in chapter 10 of First Nephi, he then proceeded to give an account of his own proceedings (1 Nephi 10:1), beginning with the sermon which led up to his call to be a prophet.

Nephi's characteristics came to light in the short passages treating this problem. As mentioned, he was showing honor to his father by classing his words as being among the choicest spiritual material. In describing the faith and obedience of Lehi, Nephi left the unmistakable connotation that he delighted in patterning his life after that of his father.²

The single emphasized teaching discovered at this point was an editorial comment by Nephi about one of Lehi's problems (1 Nephi 2:11-13). Being part of Nephi's abridgment effort, it was directed

¹Ludlow, p. 2. ²1 Nephi 1:1; 1:20; 2:1; 5:20; 16:8.
to later generations and not to his own contemporaries, at least according to the information available. It was therefore beyond the limits of this study.

More will be said in the succeeding problem regarding Nephi's successes in making the small plates. Suffice it to say here that he accomplished the task of abridging his father's record, interweaving it with his own account in a clearly understandable manner.

contained in the text of this problem were no references to former prophets, and nothing was mentioned by later Book of Mormon prophets regarding it specifically.


The last major assignment given to Nephi by the Lord, according to the record, was that of making other plates in addition to the large plates, whereon he should record the spiritual affairs of the ministry (2 Nephi 5:30-32; 1 Nephi 19:3). Jacob named them the "small plates," (Jacob 1:1), whereas Nephi, when writing on them, always referred to them simply as "these plates."

Nephi stated that the Lord had commanded him to make the plates "for a wise purpose in him," which purpose Nephi did not know (1 Nephi 9:5; 19:3), but also for the instruction of his people (1 Nephi 19:3). The "unknown purpose" was evidently the same one which motivated Mormon to include the small plates in his compilation,
the Book of Mormon (Words of Mormon 7). The purpose came to light when Martin Harris lost the translation of the Book of Lehi, the first part of Mormon's record, and the Lord commanded Joseph Smith to substitute the small plates of Nephi for it instead of retranslating the Book of Lehi (D&C sections 3 and 10). Both records covered approximately the same period of time.

Nephi's small plates were in part an abridgment of his large plates, on which he had made a more complete record of both secular and spiritual affairs (1 Nephi 19:1). In this sense, then, Nephi's effort paralleled Mormon's later work of abridging. Since Nephi was such a spiritual giant, the Lord gave him the privilege of making an abridgment of one of the most spiritual portions of Nephite history and of having his version of that period be the one to survive for modern consumption. On the plates he recorded the choicest spiritual experiences he could, many of which were evidently not on the large plates, for Mormon had no access to them there (Words of Mormon 3-4). The prophecies of the coming of Christ were especially pleasing to Mormon.

The passages considered in the analysis of this problem consisted, by default, of all verses of historical material or teachings within the writings directly attributed to Nephi which did not pertain to any of the specific, major problems discussed above. The examination of these passages brought to light many valuable findings regarding the character of Nephi, his qualifications, and his effectiveness. Unfortunately no decision could be reached regarding the relevancy of his teachings, for they were all directed to modern
Nephi's qualifications for meeting the challenges of this writing assignment began, of course, with his ability to write, as taught by his father (1 Nephi 1:1-2).\footnote{Dr. Nibley has noted that "the opening verse of the Book of Mormon explains the expression 'goodly parents' not so much in a moral sense as in a social one: Nephi tells us he came of a good family and 'therefore' received a good traditional education . . . ." Nibley, pp. 36-37.} Past experience in keeping the large plates had likewise been good training. In accepting the assignment he exemplified obedience (2 Nephi 5:31), and in carrying it out he demonstrated that the things of God were most pleasing to him (1 Nephi 6:3-5; 2 Nephi 5:32). His desire was to write a true record according to the best of his knowledge (1 Nephi 1:3). Nonetheless, he humbly admitted that he might err (1 Nephi 19:6). Writing now in his middle and old age, his concerted desire was to benefit not only his contemporaries; his love reached out to bless his posterity and all men down through the ages (1 Nephi 6:4-6; 2 Nephi 5:30; 33:3-4). One of the principle points of his message to later generations, in those last years of his life, revealed the uplifting attitude of his mind: though he had suffered many afflictions, he felt highly favored and blessed of the Lord (1 Nephi 1:1, cf. 16:8; 17:1-2). Apparently no murmuring ever escaped his lips, for he saw the results of keeping the commandments (17:3). These were the attitudes and personality traits with which Nephi approached his glorious task.

The Lord gave direct revelation to Nephi in the course of the project, first instigating it and later revealing instructions
as to the type of contents he was to include in the record (1 Nephi 19:3; 2 Nephi 5:30-32). Being the living prophet at that point, Nephi was pre-eminently the one for the job.

Nephi's methods in approaching his task were not only spiritual, they were lucid and intelligent. Since he was dealing with the problem of abridging some records and quoting large sections from others, all in the course of giving the spiritual matters of his ministry, he wisely chose to state and review his major purposes at convenient points in the narrative. This has caused many students of the Book of Mormon to wonder why Nephi was so repetitive in stating these purposes. A close examination of the text revealed, however, that such explanations came at some crucial point at which the reader might get lost. For example:

1. the beginning of the small plates (1 Nephi 1:1-3)
2. after introduction of plates of brass (1 Nephi 6:1-6)
3. end of Lehi's record abridgment (1 Nephi 9:1-6; 10:1, 15-16)
4. time of creation of large plates (1 Nephi 19:2-5)
5. time of creation of small plates (2 Nephi 5:30-34)

By placing these verbal signposts along the way, Nephi's writings became more effective and relevant.

Nephi's writing methods included the quoting of three other prophets who, with him, constituted four witnesses for Jesus Christ. The other three were Isaiah, Lehi, and Nephi's brother Jacob. This reinforced the effectiveness of his efforts to make the small plates

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1 Nephi 1:8-9; 20 and 21; 2 Nephi 6 to 10, 12 to 24.
spiritually oriented. From the time of their landing in the promised land, no historical events of significance were recorded in Nephi's writings, with the exception of chapter 5 in Second Nephi and the minor historical aspects of such doctrinal sermons as Lehi's final blessing upon his family. All of this was in fulfillment of Nephi's promise to that effect in 1 Nephi 19:5, where he said that following the historical account of his making the small plates (2 Nephi 5:30-34) he would devote the record totally to the things which he had spoken regarding sacred matters.

Nephi commanded his seed (1 Nephi 6:6) or his people (1 Nephi 19:4) that the small plates were to be used for the accounting of spiritual affairs. Consistent with this was the fact that they were used somewhat as a "family Bible" or genealogical record (Jarom 1; Omni 1), each successive generation identifying itself, if only briefly. The interesting thing was that after Nephi's death the small plates became a Jacobite record, kept solely by the descendants of Jacob. This seemed fitting in that Jacob's posterity were the prophets (Words of Mormon 3) or religious leaders in the Nephite times of righteousness (e.g., Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Amaleki), whereas Nephi's descendants were the kings and kept the large plates (Mosiah 25:13; Words of Mormon 10). In connection with this genealogical aspect of the plates, the fact was observed that after Nephi created the plates they were apparently never enlarged or added to; he himself indicated that he positively could not write certain things on them for he needed the room for writing other things--the things of the Lord (1 Nephi 6:3-4). This all became especially meaningful
when it was realized that at the precise time that the plates became "full" (Omni 30), the living prophet and holder of the plates (Amaleki) had no posterity! He was thus impressed to turn the spiritual record over to King Benjamin, who was himself a prophet. From that point on the spiritual records were evidently kept upon the large plates. The keepers of those sacred and civil records were all righteous men, many of them being the presiding prophet and some of them serving simultaneously as political leader as well. The spiritual records were thus back in the hands of Nephi's descendants, King Benjamin evidently being from his line (Mosiah 25:13). It was likewise observed that right at the point that King Benjamin received the small plates, Mormon's abridgment hit upon a spiritual high point by quoting King Benjamin's sermon (Mosiah 1 to 5). Prior to that his record had been dealing with a period of wickedness among the people which had extended for over 200 years (same period covered by Omni 1-30). King Benjamin's sermon, a great spiritual catalyst for his people, thus appeared on the large plates at or near the time that they became the principal spiritual record of the Nephites. Nephi's commandment was thus carried out, namely that his people should keep a spiritual record of their proceedings (1 Nephi 19:4).

In further regard to Nephi's methods of dealing with this assignment, and also concerning his success therein, the fact became apparent that the small plates were intended for instructing his people (1 Nephi 19:3), but also for the instruction of the Lamanites (Jarom 2). The question arose as to how much the Nephites actually used the plates. Later in their history they were evidently
published and distributed to the people along with the other records which had been kept (Alma 63:12). Even in the time of Jacob, however, there may have been copies made of the plates of brass, \(^1\) and perhaps even from the large and small plates of Nephi. The evidence seemed clear that the plates were used for instruction as intended. A statement in Alma 13:25 might seem to run contrary to that conclusion, although not necessarily so. Even with the small plates being in his custody (Mosiah 28:20), Alma said that they at that time did not know how soon the Savior was coming, although they knew it was soon. This was about B.C. 82. The small plates, on the other hand, stated specifically that Christ would come "in six hundred years" from the time Lehi left Jerusalem (1 Nephi 10:4; 19:8; 2 Nephi 25:19). \(^2\)

From this vantage point in history one can easily see that those words were meant to be taken literally, right to the very year (3 Nephi 1:4-19). From Alma's position, however, he might readily have interpreted the saying to mean "within" six hundred years (i.e., sometime between the 500th and 600th year). \(^3\) On that basis he knew they were getting close, but did not know exactly how close. The suggestion by some that Mormon seemed unacquainted with the small plates (Words of Mormon 3-4) is discussed below in the chapter on Mormon. The

\(^1\)Cannon, pp. 118-19.

\(^2\)Nephi stated that other prophets had also known the date of Christ's coming (2 Nephi 25:19). Their statements, whether on the plates of brass or the large plates, would have been available to the prophets.

\(^3\)Cf. Alma 45:10 for a similar usage of the word "in."
evidence there does not dispute the conclusion drawn here that the small plates were evidently used by the Nephites, just as Nephi had intended.

Nephi's language ability, by his own confession, was by choice plain and simple (2 Nephi 25:4, 7, 20; 31:3; 33:6), especially by comparison with Isaiah's words (2 Nephi 25:4). Although Dr. Sperry has described Nephi's language as "too involved" in certain passages, and "ambiguous and hard to understand" in others,¹ such a judgment was found not to apply to doctrinal matters, for therein Nephi was very clear (2 Nephi 25:4). It would only pertain to the word usage itself. Nephi openly acknowledged his weakness in writing, as compared to speaking (2 Nephi 33:1), but he knew that the Lord would cause his weak words to convey a strong message (33:4). His great powers of persuasion when speaking were evidently passed on to his posterity, for Alma was found to be "a man of many words" both before and after his conversion, in speaking and writing (Mosiah 27:8). Moroni testified a millennium later that the Lord had made the Nephites "mighty in words by faith" but awkward in writing (Ether 12:23-24). Such difficulties, as perceived today, are heightened by such things as cultural distance and translation literalness. Nephi and his posterity may also have had difficulty expressing themselves as well in the form of Egyptian they used as they might have done in Hebrew, particularly when conveying complex spiritual ideas (Mormon 9:33).²

¹Sidney B. Sperry, Our Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, 1947), p. 80; see also p. 30.
²Skousen, p. 274.
Burgon's study of style variations in the Book of Mormon dwelt on the writings of Nephi, Jacob, Mormon, and Moroni—the principal writers whose works were not later abridged by another. His findings showed that Nephi's writings "exceeded the other writings in the amount and quality of rhetoric."¹ This included metaphors of exceptional quality, which he felt were the most original; good use of personification; and excellent parallelism of the synonymous and climactic types. In general he felt that Nephi's rhetorical figures were beautiful and stimulating, but he was baffled that such an excellent use of rhetorical principles should go together with poor sentence structure, faulty constructions, and indefinite references. In other words, Burgon felt that Nephi's writings exceeded the others in both good and bad qualities. An explanation which seemed to escape him was the fact that Nephi lived before the others, had been trained in the learning of the Jews (1 Nephi 1:1-3), but did not pass on his complicated Jewish training to his posterity (2 Nephi 25:5-6). Nonetheless, it was obviously impossible for Nephi to divest himself totally of his cultural heritage and language in a moment. His speech patterns still carried on some of the complexities of his Old World training, and the correctness or faultiness of his sentences should not be judged by today's standards, which relate to today's language patterns.

As promised at the beginning of this chapter, the treatment

of Nephi's language abilities in connection with this problem (his abridgment assignment) likewise analyzes the language characteristics manifest throughout all of the preceding problems. This was necessary because the language patterns of his abridgment, written later in life, screened out the style of his earlier years.

A tally of the problems up through this one showed that Nephi's language ability was overwhelmingly simple and practical, as compared to being symbolic and abstract. In the texts of eleven of the problems there was a maximum of one symbolic image or abstract concept per problem (six of them had none). Three of the problems had a few abstractions but no images. Problem nine, dealing with Nephi's teachings to his brothers in explanation of Lehi's teachings, was mostly written in abstractions. It was simple as opposed to symbolic, but it did contain the following images: "hard in their hearts; fall [of his people]; natural branches; grafting in; true vine; true fold; our seed; house of Israel; tree of life; rod of iron; fiery darts; river of water; awful gulf; flaming fire; temporal body; devil as the foundation of hell; fruits." Problem thirteen, Nephi's instructions to the colony just prior to Lehi's final blessing, was also mainly phrased abstractly. It contained by far the most images, a natural consequence of the fact that his sermon was an explication of Isaiah's very symbolic writings. These symbolic images are listed below.¹

¹"Face of the earth; isles of the sea; harden their hearts; a standard; carried in their arms and upon their shoulders; seed be scattered; make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations; lands of their inheritance; out of darkness; blood of the great and abominable
The only reference to a former prophet in the text of this problem was to Joseph of Egypt, mentioned in a brief editorial by Nephi (2 Nephi 4:1-2).

Many of Nephi's teachings in Second Nephi chapters 11 to 33 might well have been addressed to his own contemporaries on certain occasions, as one of his statements seemed to imply (1 Nephi 19:3). Unfortunately, however, no evidence related any of those teachings to a specific situation during Nephi's life. Thus, all of the teachings in this problem were classified as having been addressed to future generations, including all of Nephi's posterity (2 Nephi 11:2). Nephi's familiar mode of expression at some points, speaking almost as if the reader were present, might give the impression that he was quoting from a discourse which he had delivered (e.g., 2 Nephi 32:1-2, 8). Nonetheless, the explanation had been given earlier that he was "writing" to his brethren who were yet unborn (2 Nephi 26:1; 31:1). Evidently he was employing the same direct-address style which Moroni used in addressing future generations, having been shown them by Jesus Christ (Mormon 8:35). Indeed, Nephi had also seen the people to whom he was speaking (1 Nephi 12 to 14) and could thus speak to them as if they were present carrying on a dialogue with him (e.g., 2 Nephi 32:8).

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church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood (1 Nephi 22:13); fall into the pit which they dug to ensnare the people of the Lord; tumble to the dust; they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned; blood, fire, and vapor of smoke; calves of the stall; four quarters of the earth, he numbereth his sheep; one fold and one shepherd; he shall feed his sheep, and in him they shall find pasture; the flesh; tongues."
The success of Nephi's efforts to make a choice spiritual record was seen in part in the fact that the Lord thought enough of it to have it appear today as the first portion of the Book of Mormon. First Nephi, including Nephi's great vision, was viewed as presenting in capsule form the entire Book of Mormon story in prophetic miniature. The reader may thus gain a picture of the latter days via prophecy, obtain a view of the Nephite-Lamanite history, and read choice teachings about Jesus and his gospel. Second Nephi is filled with Isaiah's writings, to give a second testimony of the same things Nephi had testified of (followed by Jacob's testimony as a third witness—2 Nephi 11:2-3) and to give the reader a deeper insight into the problems of the last days—especially through Nephi's interpretations of Isaiah. The Lord thus provided for a great impact right at the beginning of the Book of Mormon for someone who might not even finish the book.

The most specific later effect of Nephi's efforts in meeting this challenge (problem sixteen) was that noted in Mormon's writings. As mentioned above, Mormon was pleased with the small plates because of the spiritual nature of the contents, particularly the prophecies of the coming of Christ (Words of Mormon 4). A somewhat similar comment indicated another later effect of Nephi's testifying of the coming of Christ (Helaman 8:22). In that statement, however, Nephi the son of Helaman did not mention the small plates specifically, so the possibility remained that what he referred to might have been also on the large plates.

Nephi's decision to write the small plates and perhaps the
large plates in Egyptian (some form of it) also exerted a profound effect upon later generations in ancient America (1 Nephi 1:1-2). The knowledge of Egyptian might have passed away with only the plates of brass to keep the language alive (Mosiah 1:4). Nephi's statement of the necessity of preserving the language of his fathers for future generations (1 Nephi 3:19) took on added significance when it was considered that he evidently meant both Hebrew and Egyptian. "The fathers" apparently stretched back to include Joseph of Egypt, of whom the Lehi colony were a remnant. It was impressive to note that the two languages of Joseph of Egypt--Hebrew and Egyptian--were preserved for his posterity in America (Mormon 9:32-33). For Judah and his record, the "stick of Judah" (Ezekiel 37:15-20; 1 Nephi 13:20-23), the language was some form of Hebrew. The "stick of Joseph" (Ezekiel 37:15-20; 2 Nephi 3:12), of which Nephi's small plates constituted a primary part, was written on the plates in some form of Egyptian but with distinct Hebrew influences.¹ At this writing no one has spelled out exactly and conclusively how the two languages intermixed in their written

¹Drs. Sperry and Nibley have diligently shown that both Hebrew and Egyptian influences persisted throughout the entirety of Nephite history--Sperry, Compendium, pp. 31-39; Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishing Co., 1952), pp. 13-20. One certainty from the Book of Mormon itself was that Mormon and Moroni wrote in reformed Egyptian characters (Mormon 9:32). Regardless of which syntax and vocabulary was used (Hebrew or Egyptian or both), Hebraisms had crept into their language on the plates. Furthermore, Moroni affirmed (Mormon 9:32-33) that they could still write Hebrew even in his time, which indicated that the Hebrew written characters had survived in some way other than by the plates of brass or small plates.
and spoken forms. The evidence clearly showed, however, that Nephi's writings succeeded in creating an enduring reason for the Nephites to perpetuate their scriptural language, a form of Egyptian. (Mormon 9:32).

(17) Passing on His Authority and Records (Jacob 1:1-4, 9-12)

The text of Nephi's concluding problem appeared only in paraphrase form in the writings of Jacob. The challenge was for Nephi to effectively pass on his authority as civil ruler, leave the sacred records in the hands of an historian, and leave his final instructions.

Although the record was scant at this point, it did reveal that Nephi had labored all his life for the welfare of his people (Jacob 1:10). He had a lively concern for the success of his people in the future, also, and desired to be obedient to Christ (Jacob 1:4).

Nephi's method of carrying on his authority as a civil ruler was to anoint a king (Jacob 1:9). George Q. Cannon observed that the office evidently became hereditary, but that the people also had some voice in the matter of choosing their king.¹

The new king appointed was evidently not Jacob, although some have supposed he was, but did not refer to himself as such because of modesty. He always referred to the kings and the keeping of the large plates in an objective, third-person form (Jacob 3:13; 7:26). Mormon also differentiated him from the kings, referring to

¹Cannon, p. 161.
him as the first prophet (Words of Mormon 3). Later evidence strongly suggested that Nephi had conferred the office of king upon one of his sons (Mosiah 25:13). George Q. Cannon noted that for nearly two centuries thereafter the kings were mighty and faithful men of God (Jarom 7).¹ Nephi's success in this regard was therefore very good.

The Lord had already called Jacob as a prophet or witness of Christ before Nephi appointed him sacred historian, for Jacob had been visited by the Lord and had been a teacher of the people for some time (2 Nephi 2:4; 5:26; 6:2). Nephi gave the same commandment to Jacob which the Lord had given him regarding the small plates (1 Nephi 19:3-4; Jacob 1:2-4). They were to contain only the most precious things, with little history, and were to be passed down through the prophets, Jacob's seed. This was the only emphasized teaching in this problem, appearing in paraphrased form in the words of Jacob. The language ability of Nephi was therefore not very discernible. It seemed to be basically simple and practical, however, and contained no references to former prophets.

Nephi's successes in dealing with the problem of passing on his authority and records were seen in Jacob's simple statement that he obeyed the commandment of his brother (Jacob 1:8). Furthermore, the kings and prophets and other record keepers thereafter faithfully did their job right down to the end of the Nephite nation. The record keepers from King Benjamin on were all descendants of Nephi (Mosiah 25:13; Mormon 1:5). Nephi's posterity included many

¹Cannon, p. 161.
great men, such as Mosiah, his son Benjamin, and his son Mosiah. Alma and all of his descendants down through Ammaron were likewise the posterity of Nephi. Amulek, and also Mormon and Moroni were from Nephi's line.

A later effect directly referring back to this problem was noted in the fact that Jacob repeated to his son Enos the same instructions which Nephi had given him regarding the use of the small plates (Jacob 7:27). Another later effect, already mentioned above, was that the kings were named after Nephi, and that the kingdom was conferred only upon his descendants (Jacob 1:9-11; Mosiah 25:13). Finally, Nephi's profound influence upon his entire nation was summed up by speaking of him as a "just and holy" man (Alma 3:6).

SUMMARY

The table at the end of this chapter portrays the findings of this study regarding the personality and teachings of Nephi in relation to the problems of his time. Of the seventeen problems studied, all but the last one were taken from Nephi's direct words. The last one was stated in the words of Jacob, who paraphrased Nephi's words to him.

Nephi's qualifications to cope with each of the problems were clearly seen in the text of the Book of Mormon. His personality characteristics, experiences, revelations, and methods were all seen to be thoroughly adequate for the tasks he faced.

Three of the problems did not yield any emphasized teachings. Five of the problems contained teachings directed solely to later
generations. One problem had some teachings directed toward his
generation and some for later generations. Another problem which
contained teachings for his contemporaries also contained two
chapters quoted from Isaiah. The remaining seven problems incorpor-
ated emphasized teachings addressed first to Nephi's own contempor-
aries, then added to the small plates for conveyance to modern
readers. The conclusion appeared that all of the teachings addressed
to his contemporaries were relevant to the problems in which they
were stated. Appendix C lists the teachings.

Nephi's successes were excellent in all problems except
those which involved conflict with his brothers. In those situations
he achieved temporary success, adequate enough to obtain his immediate
goals and assignments. The righteous obeyed and responded well to
his efforts; the rebellious ones rejected the Lord and his prophet
and were cut off from the presence of the Lord. Nephi and his people
were then taken out of their midst. Nephi's faith, diligence, obedii-
ence, and worthiness to receive constant revelation were significant
factors in his successes.

No later effects were noted in the case of his first six
specific problems, nor in the case of the last ones. Numerous later
comments were observed in the writings of subsequent prophets regard-
ing six of the problems.

In fulfilling the major purposes for which the Book of Mormon
was written, Nephi's writings registered highest in those problems
which contained sermons or emphasized teachings. Those which consisted
primarily of historical narrative did not touch on as many of the
major purposes. All of the major purposes received some treatment, with some of them being addressed many times.

For all of the six minor hypotheses the findings were adequate and clear. Nephi's personality and teachings were abundantly displayed, as shown in the discussion above. One of the most powerful tools at his disposal, aside from his faith and other spiritual qualities, was his speaking ability. This was influenced by the Holy Spirit and served as a primary means of achieving success even on those occasions when many opponents reared their heads. On such occasions his major theme seemed to be that of faithfulness in keeping the commandments and delighting in the things of God. This was contrasted with his message of chastisement or sorrow, which spoke of the hardness of his brothers' hearts and their failure to keep the commandments and seek the Lord. It was a very simple dichotomy of life, resembling in many respects the positive-negative "opposition" theme in Lehi's teachings. These and other comparisons with Lehi, Alma, and Mormon will be drawn in the conclusion chapter of this study.

\[1\] See Table 1 in chapter 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Problems-goals</th>
<th>B. Were beneficial qualifications exhibited</th>
<th>C. Were relevant teachings emphasized?²</th>
<th>D. Successes-responses</th>
<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes fulfilled b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gaining a testimony of Lehi's words</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>received witness; converted Sam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 4 6 8 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Seeking records of Laban</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>accepted call with faith</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 6 8 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Taking initiative to obtain plates of brass</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>reactivated his brothers; angel helped</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 5 6 8 9 11    (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Slaying Laban to obtain plates</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>obeyed Lord; slew Laban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 2 6 8 9 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Obtaining plates from Zoram; persuading Zoram to join the colony</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>impersonated Laban; obtained plates; persuaded Zoram to join</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Persuading Ishmael's family to join</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>family joined; Nephi quelled rebellion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Nephi—Data Summary on Minor Hypotheses
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. Problems-goals</th>
<th>B. Were beneficial qualifications exhibited</th>
<th>C. Were relevant teachings emphasized?^a</th>
<th>D. Successes-responses</th>
<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes fulfilled^b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Copping with his brothers' rebellions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>temporary success only; Lord intervened often</td>
<td>Mosiah 10:17; 4 Nephi 1:39</td>
<td>123456789 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Gaining personal view of Lehi's vision</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>received great vision; became witness of Christ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1234567891011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Expounding Lehi's teachings to brothers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>brothers were pacified, humbled</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12345 9;011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Providing spiritual and physical food for colony after his bow broke</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>colony stopped murmuring; helped Lehi grow; obtained food</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:24; Mosiah 10:13</td>
<td>1 6 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Building a ship of inspired design</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>built ship of fine workmanship</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Problems-goals</th>
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<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes fulfilled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Making large plates for sacred and secular history</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>made plates; were handed down to Mormon's time</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Teaching his brethren to believe in the Lord their Redeemer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (plus Isaiah)</td>
<td>some believed; 2 Nephi 1:28 Lamanites rebelled later</td>
<td>123456 891011 (very many)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Establishing Nephite civilization in new land of Nephi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (some for later times also)</td>
<td>established free Jacob 1:18; nation, true Mosiah 24:4; Church; and they prospered Helaman 5:4-6; Helaman 7:7-9</td>
<td>1 56 89 (many)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Making abridgment of Lehi's record</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>made abridgment on small plates; passed it on</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Making small record of ministry</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>created a great Words of Mormon 4; record of his people Mormon 8:22; Mormon 9:32-33</td>
<td>1 6 8 (few)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 (continued)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>B. Were beneficial qualifications exhibited</th>
<th>C. Were relevant teachings emphasized?</th>
<th>D. Successes-responses</th>
<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes fulfilled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Passing on his authority and records</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Jacob kept records; kings ruled and kept records</td>
<td>Jacob 7:27; Jacob 1:9-11; Mosiah 25:13; Alma 3:6</td>
<td>1 4 6 (few)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*a*See Appendix B for list of teachings, with references.

*b*For list of major purposes see p. 20.
Chapter 5

ALMA THE YOUNGER--SEER, HISTORIAN, JUDGE, AND GENERAL

Under the inspired guidance of King Mosiah, the people of Nephi matured politically to the point of being willing to share and shoulder the burdens of society instead of loading them totally upon their king (Mosiah 29:31-39). He instituted a reign of judges, and the people appointed Alma--the son of Alma, their high priest--as the first and chief judge (Mosiah 29:42-44). This reign of judges extended from B.C. 91 until the government was overthrown in A.D. 30. As the first chief judge, Alma served in many respects as the father of his country. His labors in this capacity, as well as in his numerous other roles as seer and high priest over the Church, historian, and general, marked him as one of the most singular characters in the Book of Mormon record. Further, his efforts to be a good father resulted in a significant impact upon his society for over four hundred years. The tools of this study analyzed his performance in all of these roles with regard to his effectiveness and relevance.

A SHORT SUMMARY OF ALMA'S LIFE

Being a descendant of Nephi (Mosiah 17:2) and one of the sons of Alma, the high priest (Mosiah 27:8), did not deter Alma the Younger from leading a wicked, idolatrous life of unbelief for a period of 153
time (Mosiah 27:8-10). He carried on clandestine activities to
destroy the Church of God, contrary to the will of God and in open
rebellion against the laws of the land which forbade persecution
of the members of the Church (Mosiah 27:2-3). Following a marvelous
conversion to the Lord, Alma pursued a course diametrically opposed
to his former activities. He now sought to repair the damage he
had done, preaching the word of God to Church members and unbelievers
alike, only now he was the one receiving the persecutions (Mosiah
27:32-33). Soon he was called to be the high priest, replacing his
aged father (Mosiah 29:42). In addition to this assignment, King
Mosiah conferred the sacred records and the interpreters upon him,
thus constituting him both historian and seer (Mosiah 28:20).
Finally, he was elected or appointed chief judge over all the land
(Mosiah 29:42). In bearing these multiple responsibilities Alma
closely resembled Nephi the son of Lehi, Benjamin, and Mormon.
Contemporary Church leaders or missionaries during Alma's time were
King Mosiah, his own father Alma, Amulek, Zeezrom; Ammon, Aaron,
Omner, Himni (the four sons of Mosiah); and his own sons, Helaman,
Corianton, and Shiblon. Much of Alma's ministry had to do with the
rebellions of groups or individuals, and with extensive missionary
efforts to convert or re-convert his people to the path of righteousness.
At the conclusion of his ministry he mysteriously disappeared,
giving rise to a belief that he had been taken up by the Lord, even
as Moses (Alma 45:19).
THE PROBLEMS OF CONVERTING A NATION

The account of Alma's ministry was abridged and reported by Mormon, just as Nephi had reported Lehi's life. For this reason there were certain passages which were possibly written by Mormon, but which were nonetheless attributed to Alma for lack of positive linkage to Mormon. Fortunately they were narrative or historical portions which were not pivotal or crucial in terms of making decisions regarding the sixteen specific problems of Alma's ministry in relation to the hypotheses of this study. Indeed, the text of the Book of Mormon was remarkably clear and fruitful in providing evidence on Alma's problems, thus making relatively simpler their analysis with respect to the hypotheses.

(1) Being Converted from Idolatry (Mosiah 26:1-7; 27:1-37)

Alma's first problem resembled in some respects Nephi's initial challenge, namely, gaining a testimony of the truthfulness of his father's words. In Alma's case, however, he needed a complete conversion to the Lord and to things of righteousness, whereas Nephi had evidently been righteous before that point (1 Nephi 2:16). Alma had sunken into idolatry and wickedness, and had been carrying on secret activities to destroy the Church over which his father presided as high priest (Mosiah 27:8-10). Alma's challenge was to forsake such ingrained iniquity and become a servant of God.

Alma's qualities of character were seen in this problem to be uniquely oriented toward its solution. He had been gifted with
great powers of speech (Mosiah 27:8), which he was unfortunately using to flatter the people into wickedness. Evidently he had been of somewhat a religious nature, for he apparently had "concocted a rival system of religion and worship" in opposition to the true Church of Jesus Christ. The generation of which he was a part had grown up after King Benjamin's sermon and did not understand nor believe in the resurrection of the dead or the coming of Jesus Christ (Mosiah 26:1-2). (How interesting it was to note that these same doctrines were some of his greatest themes during his subsequent ministry.) Alma and his cohorts, including the sons of King Mosiah, were hindering the Church and were leading people away to destruction as rapidly as they could (Mosiah 27:8-10; Alma 36:14). All of this they were doing in open opposition to the word of God, and in rebellion against the law of the land (Mosiah 27:2-3).

One of the great events in history was the appearance of an angel of the Lord to put a halt to Alma's spiritual depredations. The heavenly messenger told Alma and his friends that he came in response to the prayers and faith of the people, and of Alma's father (Mosiah 27:14-16). He added further the command that Alma remember the captivity of the people in the land of Helam and the land of Nephi. Finally, he commanded Alma to cease his efforts to destroy the Church, assuring him that the work of destruction must terminate even if Alma himself had to be cast off.

The result of this manifestation was that Alma fell senseless to the earth and was carried home, where his father and the priests fasted and prayed for him for two days and two nights (he having already been unconscious for a day and a night). (Mosiah 27:18-23; Alma 36:13.) During his period of inanimation, Alma was mentally and spiritually alive and racked with the "pains of a damned soul" (Alma 36:16). He was in "the darkest abyss" of hell, suffering the pains of hell known as "eternal torment" (Mosiah 27:29; Alma 36:12-13). His spiritual agony was so great that he nearly died as he began and underwent the process of repentance (Mosiah 27:28). He desired to become extinct rather than face the judgment bar of God (Alma 36:15). By remembering Christ as the promised Savior, and exerting faith in him as a means of becoming free not only from his torment, but from the sins which he had now recognized as being contrary to the holy commandments of God, Alma suddenly felt a release from his pain (Alma 36:13, 17-19). In its stead came a refulgence of light and joy, the sweetest experience of his life to that point (Alma 36:20-21). He even thought he saw God on his throne in heaven, surrounded by angels, just as his forefather Lehi had seen (Alma 36:22).

The result of this second manifestation—the encounter with both hell and heaven—was that Alma became an ardent witness for Christ, devoting the balance of his life to the ministry. Immediately upon awaking he bore testimony to his father and the assembled priests, then went forth to right the wrongs he had committed (Mosiah 27:24-36). This same testimony of his conversion he repeated on
subsequent occasions to strengthen his people (Alma 27:25; 36:4-24). Furthermore, Alma always remembered the captivity of his fathers in the land of Helam and the land of Nephi—just as the angel had commanded him—using this as a theme in several of his sermons (Alma 5:6; 29:11-12; 36:29).

This brief summary of some of Alma's qualities seemed to underscore the fact that the Lord apparently allowed this great man to go astray far enough that his penance caused him extreme personal sacrifice, almost as much as any mortal could bear. It nearly cost him his life, as has been mentioned. Having certain great qualities, these experiences enabled him to better succor his fellow men, and that he might serve as a visible, mortal witness of the type of suffering which the Savior experienced (Alma 13:2-5), though Alma's was not as intense or extensive. In this he resembled Paul (Saul of Tarsus), the sons of Mosiah, and King Lamoni (Alma 19:6-8).

The fact that Alma, Lamoni, and Paul arose or were freed from their spiritual bondage on the third day,¹ bore a striking resemblance to the period of time Christ lay in the tomb (Matthew 27:57 to 28:7). These men, as Jonah (Matthew 12:39041), served as witnesses or types of the atonement of the Son of Man and were thus more effective in bringing about the conversion of souls. Having tasted of the bitterness of hell, they were greatly desirous that all men should be led to avoid such an experience. The Savior's experience, of course,

prepared Him to a perfect extent with this sort of resolve (Alma 7:12). 
Alma, on his part, became one of the greatest missionaries of all 
time and was filled with a constant yearning for the welfare of men 
(e.g., Alma 29:1-17; 36:24; 43:1).

The type of language used by Alma in his testimony, as stated 
in the text of this problem, was simple and direct (as opposed to 
symbolic), and abstract (as opposed to practical). The concrete 
images which he called to mind were fairly numerous, considering the 
shortness of the passage: "born again; born of God; the darkest 
abyss; marvelous light of God; every knee shall bow, and every tongue 
confess before him; shrink before the glance of his all-searching 
eye."

The teachings emphasized\(^1\) by Alma have all been alluded to 
above. They were directly relevant to his subject, the problem here 
under consideration. The text of this problem made no reference to 
former prophets; and no later effects of this specific problem were 
noted in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.

(2) Serving as Historian 
(Mosiah 28:20)

Alma's conversion was the precursor of his next problem or 
assignment: becoming the custodian of the sacred records and other 
sacred objects, and serving as the historian of his people.

Little was directly stated in the text regarding Alma's 
qualifications or activities as historian. His father had served in

\(^1\) "Emphasized teachings" as defined in Criteria for Analyzing 
Data, in chapter 1.
that capacity from the time of Alinadi's sermon (Mosiah 17:4) at least until arriving in Zarahemla, where Mosiah publicly read the record which Alma had kept (Mosiah 25:6). That record was evidently merged with the other records in King Mosiah's possession, all of which Mosiah conferred upon Alma the Younger near the time of the king's death (Mosiah 28:20). This conferring apparently constituted Alma a "seer," for he received the sacred interpreters at that time also (Mosiah 28:13-20).

Alma's recording endeavors evidently began with the beginning of Mosiah 29, although that chapter dealt with the concluding events in the life of King Mosiah, the former historian. From then until the records were bestowed upon his son, Helaman, Alma kept a precise, full, and, inspiring record, which Mormon chose to constitute a major portion of his record. Its size in the present Book of Mormon is large out of all proportion to the nineteen years covered by his ministry as seer, high priest over the Church, and historian.

The text describing this particular problem was very brief. As a result, no emphasized teachings were observed. Likewise, no evidence was found regarding teaching methods, language abilities, references to former prophets, or later effects of this problem.

(3) Serving as High Priest and Chief Judge (Mosiah 29:41-44)

The next challenge which Alma faced served to load upon his shoulders the responsibilities which had been hitherto borne by his father and by King Mosiah. Alma received the calling of high priest over the Church, and was appointed the chief judge over the entire
land—the first such judge to preside during the reign of the judges.

Analyzing Alma's qualifications for these two positions brought forth only a small amount of data from the few passages describing this problem-assignment, but the evidence was quite clear. Alma's background experiences included close acquaintance with his father, who was high priest before him. Alma very probably knew King Mosiah well, having associated with his sons both before and after their conversion (Mosiah 27:10, 32). Furthermore, the gifts of leadership which Alma had exhibited even before his spiritual rebirth, showed that he was a strong and persuasive leader of men (Mosiah 27:8-9). The strength of his testimony and his missionary zeal have already been submitted as evidence. The Book of Mormon stated in no uncertain terms that Alma judged "righteous judgments," and that his labors contributed toward a reign of peace in the land (Mosiah 29:43). These successes marked Alma as a capable individual to serve as the high priest and chief judge.

No emphasized teachings were presented in the text of this problem. The language ability noticed was simple and practical. Nothing was seen regarding types of revelation, teaching methods, or references to former prophets. No later effects resulting from this problem were noticed in the writings of subsequent Book of Mormon prophets.

(4) Trying the Case of Nehor
(Alma 7:1-33)

Alma's first recorded major trial case as judge, resulted from the murder of a righteous man named Gideon. The defendant was
an apostate preacher known as Nehor. The issue at stake was murder, but also the attempt by Nehor to enforce priestcraft by the sword (Alma 1:12).

Perhaps the most prominent characteristic exhibited by Alma in this case was his obedience to law. As an introduction to the problem he stated that although their beloved King Mosiah had died, leaving "none" to reign in his stead, the people had accepted the laws which he had established (Alma 1:1). In other words, the reign of the judges was to be a reign by law, not a reign by man, although men such as Alma were appointed as judges to administer the law. As mentioned, the first severe case to test the viability of these laws was that regarding Nehor.

Alma's father had tried cases under the law of the Lord (Mosiah 26:1-37), and Alma himself was probably familiar with the particulars involved. This and other training led him to give a fair hearing of the evidence (Alma 1:11) before passing judgment. His decision gave a careful and logical explanation of the reason why priestcraft was so dangerous (Alma 1:12), why Gideon's death had to be paid for (1:13), and that he had to die in accordance with the law of Mosiah, which had been sustained by the people (1:14) and inspired of the Lord (Helaman 4:22). At the execution site, Nehor received the opportunity of confessing publicly "that what he had taught to the people was contrary to the word of God" (1:15).

A summary of Alma's teaching methods in this situation showed

1For a definition of "priestcraft" see 2 Nephi 26:29.
that he taught by example, as well as by clear precept. He reasoned from the law, holding it up in honor. His reference to Mosiah was likewise to honor him.

The few teachings emphasized in the text of this problem have been mentioned above. They were all clearly relevant to the problem under consideration. Alma's language style was simple and practical, with only one use of a concrete or symbolic image: "blood would come upon us for vengeance."

Nehor died "an ignominious death" (1:15), which was a success on Alma's part as chief judge. The response of the people was not what Alma desired, however, for priestcraft continued to spread (1:16). This might be contrasted with a later incident, where the death of an apostate quickly resulted in the repentance of all his followers (Alma 30:57-58). Nonetheless, following Nehor's death Alma continued to enforce the law, which resulted in a period of peace as the wicked among those not belonging to the Church were forced to be still (Alma 1:32). At the same time, the wicked among the members of the Church were excommunicated, and the righteous began to prosper exceedingly because of steady righteousness and caring for each other's economic and spiritual welfare (Alma 1:21-31).

No later effects of this problem were discernible in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.

(5) Overcoming the Amlicite Rebellion (Alma 2:1 to 3:5; 3:20-25)

The sequel to the episode of Nehor and the wickedness which he caused to erupt, was a full-scale plot to overthrow the government
of judges. A man after the order of Nehor (Alma 2:1), Amlici by name, conspired with a large number of people to establish himself as king over the land (2:2). When he was defeated in a public election, Amlici led his people into battle against the Nephites (2:3-10). Alma's challenge was thus to confront Amlici on the battlefield.

Elder John A. Widtsoe's evaluation of Alma's qualifications to cope with this problem was that "he was a man of peace but insisted that righteousness must prevail. He was no mollycoddle. . . . When the enemy were defeated, Alma pursued them and made them sue for mercy. He was great as judge and successful as general."¹ The fact that he was willing to march in the forefront with his army spoke well for the courage of Alma (2:16). Alma's broad powers as judge evidently involved both the executive, legislative, and judicial aspects of government (Alma 1:2; 4:16). In this capacity, he was endowed with the authority to go forth and enforce the laws, even to the putting down of rebellions. In addition, as a righteous man he received, and his army received, the strengthening power of the Lord to meet the foe (2:18). They slew many Amlicites (the Nephite apostates), and in a second phase of the war were successful in routing the combined forces of the Amlicites and the Lamanites who had likewise entered the fray. Alma had been tactician enough to send spies out, who discovered the enlarged army and thus

averted a great destruction among the Nephites. His most powerful qualification, however, was his faith. Having prayed with mighty faith, Alma was successful in personally slaying Amlici and in repulsing the king of the Lamanites (Alma 2:30-32). During the course of the battle, Alma received a wound which later prevented his leading the army in another battle against resurgent Lamanites (3:20-24). The army he sent out was successful, however, in repelling the enemy and again establishing peace in the land.

Alma's account of the Amlicite crisis did not yield forth any emphasized teachings. His successes and the people's responses, which have been indicated already, included winning two major battles and sending forth a military expedition to win a third battle. With the help of the power of God, Alma was successful in preserving liberty among the Nephites.

The language describing the events of this problem was simple and practical. Although taken from Alma's record, the wording may have been Mormon's, whose abridgment included the writings of Alma. This was found to be true for all of the problems in Alma's life except in those cases where his historical narrative or sermons were cited as being direct quotes from his record.

As far as the record revealed, there were no references to former prophets in the text of this problem. Likewise, no later effects of the problem were noticeable in the writings of later Book of Mormon writers.
(6) Coping with Post-War Wickedness (Alma 4:1-20)

Following the war, wickedness increased considerably. Alma's challenge was to stabilize the Church and reconvert his people to Christ that they might avoid such destructions as had come about because of the defection of the Amlicites and the resulting war. As a later writer in the Book of Mormon indicated, the troubles with the Lamanites were always preceded by such things as king-making, wickedness, and rebellions (Alma 51:8-9, 13-16; 59:11-12). This was found to agree with the Lord's promise that if the Nephites rebelled against God, the Lamanites would be a scourge to "stir them up in the ways of remembrance" (1 Nephi 2:24). In other words, Alma's problem was to cope with the spiritual problems in order to preserve civil order.

Those qualifications necessary for successfully meeting this problem were largely spiritual. Alma's role as seer and high priest over the Church provided him with the authority to strike at the roots of the difficulty. A look at his personality traits showed that he felt afflicted because of the increase of pride and worldly materialism among the members of the Church (Alma 4:6-7). Because of this wickedness, and seeing the gross inequalities which existed among the people because of economic differences and because the wicked persecuted the righteous (4:12-15), Alma chose to vacate his position as chief judge and devote his total time to the work of the ministry (4:16-19). In meeting this challenge he had the supreme qualification of having the presence of the Lord's Spirit to aid him (4:15).
Thus armed with the Spirit, Alma was equipped for "bearing down in pure testimony" against the pride, craftiness, and contentions among the wicked of his people (4:19). This he felt was the only way to succeed; or, as he said during a later crisis, preaching the word of God had a "more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword" (Alma 31:5). This was obvious, for even though the preceding war had humbled the Nephites because of deaths and crop losses (Alma 4:2-5), to the extent that 3,500 converts joined the Church in one year, the members soon waxed wicked when their prosperity increased (4:6-10).

Alma had consecrated teachers, priests, and elders to watch over the Church (4:7); now he himself went forth to bear "testimony of the word, according to the spirit of revelation and prophecy" which he possessed (Alma 4:20). He had personally selected his successor as chief judge, and the people had given their voice to sustain Nephihah, the new judge (4:16-17).

Alma's successes, then, were temporary in that the converts immediately following the war soon joined the other members of the Church in ways of pride and wickedness. The Church began to fail (4:10). Alma was successful, however, in finding a righteous man, Nephihah, to replace him as chief judge. Nephihah, and after him his son, Pahoran, proved to be righteous men and noble patriots (Alma 50:37; 61:1-21; 62:1). Alma, on his part, exhibited spirituality and humility in abdicating from a position of high honor in order to pursue the work of the Lord.

In the text of this problem there were no references to
former prophets. The language ability was not clearly attributable either to Alma or to Mormon, inasmuch as no direct quotation from Alma's record was indicated. No later effects of this problem were visible in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.

(7) Reforming the Church at Zarahemla (Alma 5:1-62; 6:1-6)

Wickedness was apparently rampant right in the center of the Church, even in the city of Zarahemla (cf. Alma 7:3-6). Alma's challenge was to stabilize and cleanse the Church there before he could perform a mission to the outlying settlements. According to the word of the Lord as cited by a later prophet, "the inward vessel shall be cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also" (Alma 60:23).

Having the authority of God as His seer and high priest, and being called of God to teach the people (Alma 5:3, 44), Alma was well qualified to minister to the people in Zarahemla. The sensitivity of his nature was seen in the fact that he felt an emotional commitment to the people, feeling greatly afflicted and sorrowful because of their dilemma (cf. 7:3, 5). He spoke in the energy of his soul (5:43), speaking by the spirit of revelation and prophecy (5:46-48) and in accordance with the direct words and commandments of the Holy Spirit to him (5:50-52, 61).

Alma's teaching methods included several allusions to former prophets: his own father, Alma the First; Abinadi; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He cited the experience with captivity and the Lord's deliverance which Alma the First and his people had had.
Alma spoke plainly, used rhetorical questioning, and bore his personal testimony. He quoted the words of the Lord to him, warned the people of the dangers of hell and being cut off from the Lord, and concluded with a command to the members and a plea to the nonmembers to accept the words which he had spoken under the authority of the Lord. As Elder John A. Widtsoe said, "... Alma focused his teachings upon the duties and opportunities of daily life. ... He taught an everyday religion."\(^1\)

Alma used very pictorial language, calling upon the imagination of the hearer to visualize numerous events and images.\(^2\) His language was simple and practical, but he also used many abstractions.

The teachings which Alma emphasized centered largely in the need of the spiritual rebirth of the people. He catalogued many of their sins and taught them how to overcome them. His own personal testimony and the words of the Lord regarding repentance served to emphasize these teachings. All of the teachings were observably directly relevant to his audience and their problems.

\(^1\) Widtsoe, "Alma Speaks," p. 91.

\(^2\) Specific images: "changed their hearts; deep sleep; midst of darkness; the light of the everlasting word; bands of death; chains of hell; his image in your countenance; eye of faith; mortal body; voice of the Lord; face of the earth; tribunal of God; pure heart and clean hands; garments are washed white; garments stained with blood; song of redeeming love, fruit of the tree of life; eat and drink of the bread and waters of life; cast into the fire; good fruit; sheep having no shepherd, voice of the good shepherd; sheep of the shepherd; his fold; ends of the earth; ax is laid at the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire, yea, a fire which cannot be consumed, even an unquenchable fire; turning your backs upon the poor; names shall be blotted out; book of life; wolves; flock."
The results and successes of Alma's endeavors were very rewarding to him. He ordained priests and elders by the laying on of hands (6:1), and blotted out the names of the unrepentant from the books of the Church (6:3). "It was a restless period. The spirit of evil, as well as of good, was among the people," noted Elder Widtsoe. Capitalizing on the good, Alma established the Church, putting it in order. No later effects regarding this problem were observed in the writings of later Book of Mormon prophets.

(8) Reforming the Church at Gideon (Alma 6:7-8; 7:1-27; 8:1-6)

Turning from Zarahemla to the valley of Gideon, Alma carried the reform movement into the city of Gideon, it having been named after the righteous man whom Nehor had slain (6:7).

Alma functioned in much the same capacity that John the Baptist served in some years later--that of a forerunner or preparer for the coming of Christ (7:9). Continuing with the same qualifications and abilities mentioned in the preceding problem, Alma was also filled with the Spirit of the Lord in great abundance as he spoke to the people of Gideon (7:4-5, 9, 14, 17, 26). Not all of the sermon was recorded in Mormon's abridgment (8:1), but it contained much evidence of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The people were not so steeped in their sins as had been the people of Zarahemla. Alma immediately perceived by the Spirit that the people believed what he said (7:17), and this brought great joy to him.

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Having taught of the coming of Christ and of the necessity of laying aside sin in order to take hold of the many spiritual attributes which he spelled out for them, Alma concluded with a final blessing upon the people (7:27). All of these emphasized teachings were found to be relevant to his perceived problem. The language which he employed included references to the former prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. His mode of speaking was simple and practical, with some abstractions. The concrete visual images which he used were the following: "judgment-seat; idols; his mortal tabernacle; chosen vessel; according to the flesh; blot out their transgressions; path of righteousness; crooked paths; his course is one eternal round; unholy temples; keep your garments spotless."

The people were very responsive to Alma's message, making his success a joyful one. He encountered similar results at Melek, the next city which he visited. There the people came from throughout the land to be baptized. (8:5).

Later prophets in the Book of Mormon made no direct reference to subsequent effects of this problem.

(9) Performing a Mission to Ammonihah (Alma 8:8 to 9:33; 12:1 to 13:30)

One of the greatest challenges of Alma's life was his experience with the hardhearted people of Ammonihah, the city to which he turned after leaving Melek. Satan had gotten a great hold upon the people in Ammonihah (8:9), and the labors there nearly cost Alma his life.

With great sorrow and anguish over the wickedness of the people, his anxiety being even unto pain (8:14; 13:27; cf. Mosiah
28:3-4), Alma proceeded to wrestle with the problem, imploring the Lord in mighty prayer in behalf of the people (8:10). Clearly evident was the presence of the help of the Lord in all of his activities: having been first rejected, and having left the city, Alma was met by an angel (8:15). The angel (the same one who had assisted in Alma's own conversion) warned Alma of a plot which the people were working on to destroy the liberty of the Nephites (8:17). Throughout his second visit to the city Alma was guided by the Lord. Amulek, a wealthy man in the city, was moved by an angel to care for Alma. He joined Alma when, many days later, they were instructed to go forth and minister to the people. The Lord endowed them with power to escape bonds, dungeons, and death (8:31); He gave them the ability to perceive the thoughts of their adversaries (12:3); and he spoke to them by his Spirit (14:11).

Alma's approach to the people, his method of teaching, was very personal. He used direct, rhetorical questions. From the scriptures he reasoned and quoted, including references to Lehi, Melchizedek, and Abraham. Alma expounded the scriptures logically and plainly, teaching the plan of redemption and the need of repentance. Prophesying of impending destruction was a major ingredient of his message also. The text pertaining to his mission in Ammonihah presented many teachings, but even that was merely a small abridgment of the total words which he spoke to those people in an effort to bring them to repentance (13:31).

The teachings which Alma emphasized were plainly relevant to the audience and its problems. A portion of his message was directed
straight to Zeezrom, a sly lawyer who sought to entrap him, but it was likewise addressed at the same time to the ears of all who were standing around them. A large portion of his discourse came as a response to Zeezrom's earnest questions regarding the meaning of certain teachings. This occurred when Zeezrom began to recognize his sins and commenced seeking for spiritual knowledge (12:7-8; and 12:9 to 13:30). Citing numerous teachings about the Redeemer, Alma turned to examples of righteous people such as those in Melchizedek's land of Salem, who had turned to the Savior and had been sanctified from their sins. This was exactly the sort of thing which Alma desired the people of Ammonihah to do. In other words, his teachings were very applicable and apropos.

The terminology and language of Alma's words were simple and practical. He also used many abstractions and verbal images.¹

Soon after delivering his classic, spiritual sermon, which had concluded with a thrilling announcement of the nearness of the Savior's advent, Alma was bound with strong cords and taken before the chief judge of the land. Then he and Amulek were forced to view the burning martyrdom of some of the wives and children of the men whom they had converted, and who had been cast out of the city

¹Specific images: "wrestling with God in mighty prayer; face of the earth; hearts have been grossly hardened; hardhearted and stiffnecked; a snare of the adversary; encircle you about with his chains; chains of hell; bar of God; the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us; lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever; the forbidden fruit; fruit of the tree of life; the foundation of the world; garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb; the voice of the Lord, by the mouth of angels; our vineyard."
(Alma 14:4-9). Alma and Amulek spent many days thereafter in prison. After suffering beatings, verbal abuse, hunger and thirst, nakedness, and confinement, Alma and Amulek were finally freed by the power of the Lord. They burst their bonds, the walls of the prison fell upon and killed their chief persecutors, and Alma and Amulek left the land under command of the Lord. Later, the entire city was destroyed in one day by the Lamanites (16:2-3; 9-11). These were the terribly sad results of Alma's mission to the city of Ammonihah. The few good results are discussed in the next problem.

The one later effect of this problem was noted in a statement by Moroni: "Behold, it was the faith of Alma and Amulek that caused the prison to tumble to the earth." (Ether 12:13.) Another probable effect was found in Helaman 4:21.

(10) Ministering to Zeezrom, Amulek, and the People at Sidom (Alma 15:1-19)

Having fled from Ammonihah, Zeezrom and the other converts of that city had taken up some state of residency at Sidom. Zeezrom was spiritually and mentally afflicted with a scorching, burning fever (15:3). Amulek had lost his family, friends, and wealth. Finally, the people at Sidom were in need of the reform movement which Alma had been fostering. These were the problems which confronted Alma as he arrived at Sidom. To this might be added the fact that he, himself, was probably not in the best of condition following his imprisonment.

With characteristic sensitivity of heart, Alma responded
immediately to a request from Zeezrom that he and Amulek visit him (15:4). Although he had formerly been an enemy, Zeezrom had the faith to be healed and was healed by the power of the Lord through Alma (15:5-11). He was then baptized and became an ardent missionary companion to Alma.

Alma established the Church in Sidom, consecrated priests and teachers (no elders were mentioned), who baptized the many people that flocked in from the surrounding regions (15:13-14). Alma again exhibited loving kindness by taking Amulek into his own home, there to "administer unto him in his tribulations" and strengthen him in the Lord (15:18). These were the activities, and the qualifications for those activities, which the record attributed to Alma.

The successes experienced by Alma included, as mentioned above, the conversion of Zeezrom, his healing, and the baptism of many people in Sidom. The people humbled their pride and assembled to worship and pray (15:17). Finally, he ministered to the needs of Amulek, who continued throughout Alma's ministry as one of his choice missionary companions.

The text of this problem did not contain any references to former prophets, nor did it show forth any emphasized teachings. The language ability manifest in the words directly quoted from Alma was simple and practical, with no concrete verbal images. Also, no later effects of this problem were noted in the writings of subsequent Book of Mormon prophets.
The concluding phase of the reform movement involved certain missionary efforts in order to establish the Church generally throughout the land (16:15). A second problem during this same period related to an invasion of the Lamanites, their destruction of the city of Ammonihah, and their capturing of some other Nephites.

Alma's efforts to cope with these problems were based upon his spiritual qualifications as a seer and high priest. When the chief captain of the Nephites came to Alma requesting inspired guidance as to going in search of the captured Nephites, Alma went to the Lord and received not only a "yes" answer, but also the specific battle strategy! (16:5-6). In ministering to his people, Alma manifested a Christ-like attitude, showing no respect of persons (16:14).

No emphasized teachings were detectable in the passages describing this problem. The language was simple and practical, but was not attributable with certainty to Alma, for no direct quotations were given. The abridgment by Mormon may have stated the passages in Mormon's words. From what little evidence was visible, it appeared that Alma had continued to preach repentance and the coming of the Lord (16:13, 20).

The responses of the people, and Alma's successes, were notable. Not one soul of the captured Nephites was lost, thanks to the revelation of the Lord through Alma. Furthermore, the Lord poured out his Spirit upon the people to prepare their minds for Alma's message regarding the coming of the Lord, that they might
receive the words of Christ when He should actually come among them (16:16-17). In this manner Alma and his co-workers were successful in getting the victory over the devil (16:21).

Former prophets were not referred to in the text of this problem. In like manner, no reference to this problem was observed in the works of later Book of Mormon writers.

(12) Establishing a Homeland for the People of Ammon
(A Alma 17:1; 27:16, 19-20, 25; 29:1-17)

While on a journey, Alma was astonished to meet the sons of Mosiah who had been on a mission among the Lamanites for fourteen years (17:1, 4). They were returning to request asylum for the many converts who had been expelled from their cities by the unconverted Lamanites. The Ammonites (for so the converted Lamanites were called) were in need of a homeland.

Alma's behavior revealed the fact that he had love for the Lamanites just as did the sons of Mosiah. He conducted his brethren to his own home, and then presented them to the chief judge, where they made their request (27:20). When the Nephites assented to having the Ammonites join them, Alma journeyed with his brethren into the wilderness to convey the news. While there he related the story of his own conversion (27:25). He was completely successful in helping the Nephites to accept the Ammonites, and he himself accepted them with all his heart.

One of the most striking aspects of Alma's character was seen in the joy he felt at the time of his first meeting with the
returning sons of Mosiah (17:1-2). This joy was particularly great because they were still faithful and had grown spiritually, and was even greater when he came to know the success they had had in converting thousands of Lamanites to a belief in Christ (29:14-16). The entire episode so motivated Alma that he poured forth his heart in a psalm-like passage regarding missionary work (Alma 29). His yearning desire was to proclaim the word of the Lord to all men in order that sorrow might cease upon the earth (29:1-2). He rejoiced in bringing souls unto repentance; and his joy was more full, he said, because of the success had by his brethren, the sons of Mosiah (29:9, 14-16). The largeness of Alma's heart, and his sincere rejoicing in the successes of others, showed him to be a qualified servant of the Lord for assisting the people of Ammon in this problem. His gratitude expressed for past blessings and the mercy of the Lord also marked him as a humble and grateful man (29:10).

The only teachings emphasized in the passages pertaining to this problem were in Alma 29, a chapter included by Mormon without stating the audience to whom it was presented originally. The contents seemed to suggest that Alma had written it in his journal but had not addressed it to his own contemporaries. Since the record did not include it as part of the solution of one of Alma's problems, the only alternative was to consider it as directed toward a modern audience and modern problems. For this reason no judgment could be rendered regarding its relevancy, as that would go beyond the scope of this study.

No references to former prophets were found in the text of this problem, and no later effects of the problem were noted thereafter.
in the writings of other Book of Mormon prophets.

(13) Trying the Case of Korihor
(Alma 30:1-6; 12-59)

The next problem and challenge in which Alma was personally involved, according to the record, was in trying the case of an anti-Christ known as Korihor. Having been before the magistrates of various jurisdictions in the land, Korihor finally found himself facing Alma the high priest, and Nephihah the chief judge (30:29). Alma's challenge was to meet the blasphemous accusations of this man. Korihor was evidently being heard on some charge such as blaspheming to the extent of disturbing the peace, plus inciting to civil wickedness (30:18, 29).

The nature of the trial was seemingly along religious lines, for Alma spoke while the chief judge apparently remained largely silent. As suggested by Dr. Sperry, "it appears that even during the days of the judges, religious authorities had certain civil powers and carried out judgments against offenders." Alma's qualifications to sit in judgment included, naturally, his authority as high priest. From his background before his own conversion, he could likewise well understand the evil forces at work within Korihor, and the subtle but powerful persuasiveness of which he was capable.

The presence of the Holy Spirit seemed to be with Alma, for he perceived that Korihor actually did believe in a God (30:42), as

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1Sidney B. Sperry, Our Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, 1947), p. 233.
the man's own later confession verified. The strongest evidence for the presence of the power of God, and his acknowledgment of Alma as the servant of the Lord to handle this problem, was the manifestation of the Lord's cursing upon Korihor (30:49-50). Surely the Almighty would not have shown forth such a sign had Alma not been qualified to request it. Further, Alma perceived that Korihor was not sincerely repentant even after the curse came, for when he requested the sign be removed Alma said if that occurred he would still endeavor to lead the people astray (30:55). Nonetheless, he said, "be it unto thee even as the Lord will." In this he demonstrated a total absence of presumptuousness on his part, even though in calling forth the sign he had acted with full authority from the Lord (30:47-49).

A brief look at some other characteristics which the text ascribed to Alma revealed that he was not guilty of the accusations which Korihor had leveled against him and the other priests. He did not glut himself upon the labors of others, but labored with his own hands for his support (30:32-33). His sole purpose in serving in the Church was for the joy of seeing his brethren rejoice (30:34).

Alma's methods of teaching or interrogating were observed to be centered in questioning Korihor to draw forth his beliefs and feelings. He positively asserted that Korihor knew the truth, and went on to reason about the fact that all things testified of the truths of which Alma spoke regarding the existence of God (30:39-42). Further, Alma declared that Korihor had had signs enough and needed no other sign. The fact that Korihor was seeking for a sign correlated
precisely with the fact that he was involved in whoredoms (30:18),
which the Savior said were the antecedent of sign-seeking (Matthew
16:4). All of Alma's teachings were thus definitely seen to be
directly relevant to the problem of Korihor. He made no reference
to former prophets, and his language style was simple and practical,
with some abstractions.

The success of Alma's efforts was visible beyond the fact
that Korihor remained deaf and dumb (30:50-51, 56, 58-59) and
was thus halted from his apostate activities. A proclamation was
sent forth by the chief judge warning all of Korihor's adherents that
"they must speedily repent lest the same judgments would come unto
them." (30:57). The "moral legislation" had a beneficial effect,
for they were "all" converted again (30:58). Korihor, however,
apparently never repented but was killed by the Zoramites (30:59).

The later writers in the Book of Mormon made no reference
to this problem.

(14) Leading a Mission to the
Zoramites (Alma 31:1 to 33:23;
35:1-14)

The same Zoramites who were such a problem to Korihor now
became a challenge to Alma. Their leader, Zoram, was fostering
idol worship, but evidently also a form of priestcraft, preying upon
the poor (32:5; 35:3). Learning of this, Alma was faced with the
responsibility of leading a mission to correct and reconvert these
people lest they join with the Lamanites (31:4). He knew the word
had more power than the sword (31:5).
Alma's qualifications to cope with this current distress were of course derived from his role as high priest, but also from his great love of people and the high value which he placed upon the souls of men (31:55). He was severely grieved at the wickedness of the Zoramites, and astonished at their apostate form of worship (31:1-2, 12, 19, 24-26, 30-33). On the other hand, he had great joy in the humility of the poor among the Zoramites who finally accepted his message (32:6).

Approaching his assignment with deep and earnest prayer, Alma entreated the blessings of the Lord upon himself and his other missionary companions. The result was that the Lord poured forth his Spirit in rich abundance upon Alma and his fellow laborers (31:36-38). Alma's prayer had been one of faith (31:38).

Alma's teachings and methods were not having much effect upon the wealthy and prosperous citizens of Antionum, the land of the Zoramites, until a group approached him who were both economically poor and poor in spirit (32:2-5). His instant response was to turn away from the unreceptive rich to whom he had been speaking, and give his full attention to the poor who were seeking for truth (32:6-7). Through much logical reasoning and expounding of the scriptures he laid the gospel before them. His teachings included references to the prophets Zenos, Zenock, and Moses. The message Alma conveyed to his impoverished hearers was that they were fortunate to be poor to the extent that it had led them to be humble. This was an excellent application of their condition to the teachings he wished to impart. He continued on to emphasize that it was not necessary to be in a
fancy church building in order to worship, and that the prophets who taught that also testified of Christ. A large portion of his sermon focused on the principle of faith, and how, in the likeness of a seed, it grows and can be nurtured into bearing fruit. The evidence clearly indicated that his emphasized teachings were all applicable and relevant to the current situation.

The language used by Alma in this instance was simple and practical, but with many abstractions. There was also some symbolism in the analogy of the seed and faith. The following verbal images appeared in his teachings: "the flesh; hearts; seed planted, swelling, sprouteth; tasted this light; tree, fruit; root; ground is barren."

Alma's success with the people of the Zoramites was a mixture of good and bad: the righteous were expelled from the city and received hospitable treatment from the Ammonites in the land of Jerushon (Alma 35:9). On the other hand, the wicked Zoramites did exactly as Alma had feared they would, mixing with the Lamanites and stirring them up to war with the Nephites (35:10). The result was that war did occur, as described in Alma chapters 43 and 44.

The only later effect of this problem which was noted in the writings of subsequent prophets in the Book of Mormon, was a statement by a man named Aminadab, wherein he referred to the fact that Alma, Amulek, and Zeezrom had preached to certain people (Helaman 5:41). Since the mission to the Zoramites was, according to the record, the only occasion on which all three of those men were preaching together, this apparently had reference to this
problem (Alma 31:6).  

(15) Giving Assignments and Teachings to His Sons; Sending Them to Preach (Alma 35:15-16; 36:1 to 43:1)

Having returned from his mission to the Zoramites, Alma still felt great sorrow for the wickedness of his people. Part of his grief was over his own son, Corianton, who had transgressed while serving in the mission to the Zoramites. These factors taken together caused Alma to gather his three sons together for the purpose of giving them instructions and commandments (Alma 35:15-16; 39:3). Part of the objective of their discussions was to pass on to Helaman the sacred records and other sacred treasures. Another purpose was apparently to prepare the three sons more fully for further preaching assignments (37:47; 38:15; 42:31; 43:1).

The foremost qualification which Alma possessed for instructing his own sons was the fact that he was a righteous, concerned father. In addition to that, as the presiding high priest over the Church he had the responsibility and the authority to correct Corianton for his misbehavior while on a mission for the Church. One of Alma's basic characteristics was the desire to bring others to the same joy which he had received from his own conversion (36:24). His desire to have his sons be obedient to his commandments was properly exemplified by Alma himself in his obedience to the request of the Church.

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angel who had converted him. He had urged Alma to remember always the captivity of his fathers; this Alma had done (36:29).

Alma was wise in his choice of instruction methods. To Helaman, the oldest and perhaps the most righteous of the sons, Alma related the story of his own former iniquities. He did not condescend to details of his iniquities, but used this personal experience as a means of stimulating Helaman's desire to bring souls to glory. In more abbreviated fashion Alma related the same story to Shiblon. Conversely, Alma did not relate this story to Corianton, who might have taken license from that precedent, justifying his own sins. Having been formerly rebellious himself, Alma was able to perceive the problems Corianton had gone through. He chose the most edifying doctrines possible to heal Corianton's spiritual wounds. Although he pointed out to Corianton the righteousness of his brother Shiblon (39:1-2), Alma did so for the purpose of urging him to follow his good example and counsel (39:10), not merely to reproach him by saying, "Why can't you be as good as Shiblon, your older brother?" Alma was firm in commanding his son to repent (39:12-13). He used rhetorical questioning to aid this process, then turned to more direct instruction. Furthermore, Alma's commandment to Corianton that he should return and confess his sins before those whom he had wronged (39:13), was something which Alma himself had also needed to do (Mosiah 27:35). He had set the example, and likewise understood the problem sufficiently to succor his son.

Other teaching methods observed were Alma's reference to the scriptures, and prophets such as Adam and Lehi. In addition, he
bore his own testimony to the truth, a testimony he had received from the Spirit of God (e.g., Alma 37:6). In speaking with Helaman about the sacred objects which he was handing over to him, Alma used those objects as visual aids, capitalizing on the teaching moment by driving home some doctrinal concepts in relation to the objects. He was firm in issuing commandments to Helaman (37:1-2, 20), just as he was later with Corianton. He also used the technique of presenting both a promise and a warning in connection with the manner in which the records must be used and preserved (37:15-18). Further, Alma instructed Helaman as to what he should teach the people (37:29-34).

In all of this teachings, Alma demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the scriptures and of the doctrines of the gospel, at the same time showing that he could reason from them and apply these teachings to the problems of his sons. With all of his learning and wisdom, however, he humbly acknowledged the limits of his knowledge (Alma 37:11). It appeared to be in connection with this subject of humility that Alma made a special appeal to Helaman to remember his youthfulness and the need to learn (36:3; 37:35).

The types of revelation qualifying Alma for his task included his former experiences—angels and a vision. While teaching his sons he was filled with the spirit of prophecy (37:15). In addition, one of his statements suggested he had advanced so far in his spiritual progression that the Lord had affirmed his calling and election had been made sure (Alma 36:28; cf. D&C 131:5). Of great importance in teaching Corianton was the influence of the Holy Spirit in helping Alma to perceive the state of mind of his son (40:1; 41:1; 42:1).
Finally, it was observed that the direct word of the Lord had come to Alma, bidding him to command his sons "to do good, lest they lead away the hearts of many people to destruction." (39:12.) The importance and relevance of this command was seen in the fact that Corianton's former actions had caused the Zoramites to disbelieve Alma's words (39:11). Alma's own experience in being a great hindrance to the Church (Mosiah 27:9) would have added impetus to his desire to lead his son toward righteousness.

Alma's language style was simple and primarily abstract in his discourses to his sons. A sizeable number of verses were stated in practical terms, however. The teachings to Shiblon contained only one concrete verbal image as compared with many addressed to Helaman and Corianton.¹

The teachings emphasized by Alma in solving this particular problem were found to be relevant to the situation. Many of them have been outlined above. Summarily stated, his instructions to Helaman touched on his new call as historian, the manner in which

¹Specific images addressed to Helaman: "be lifted up; by the mouth of his holy angel; voice of thunder; the whole earth did tremble beneath our feet; gall of bitterness; everlasting chains of death; marvelous light; concourses of angels; limbs did receive their strength; delivered me from prison, and from bonds; swallowed up the Egyptians in the Red Sea; tongue; his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round; face of the earth; bring forth out of darkness unto light; a straight course; carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise; look to God and live." To Shiblon: "give ear to my words." To Corianton: "shedding of innocent blood; light and knowledge of God; lusts of your eyes; weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; every limb and joint shall be restored to its body; yea, even a hair of the head shall not be lost; drink the dregs of a bitter cup; endless night of darkness."
he should use the records, and what he should and should not teach. In connection with this new call, Alma cited his own conversion and urged Helaman to labor to save souls. To Shiblon the instructions were shorter but similar, including also a compliment for faithfulness and patience while on his mission. Corianton received a firm but loving chastisement, followed by admonitions and doctrinal teachings regarding questions which he had in his own mind. These questions, and Alma's answers, concerned the topics of resurrection, restoration, and the justice of God. Alma endeavored to expound and apply these teachings to meet the needs and understanding of his respective sons. As one noted scholar has written regarding Alma, "He has a wide range of knowledge, with a simple, clear discussion of many problems and on some subjects the best in Scripture."  

No detailed record was found regarding Alma's success with his sons, or the impact of his message upon them. They evidently obeyed and went forth to preach among the people. Being a missionary at heart until the last, Alma himself also went forth to declare the word (43:1). Corianton apparently repented and became a consistent servant of the Lord engaged in doing good continually (49:30; 63:3, 10). He was evidently even considered for the position of historian at the end of Shiblon's life, but had gone to the land northward for a time and was unavailable (63:10-11). Helaman kept the records faithfully and served diligently in the office of high priest. During

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1Franklin S. Harris, Jr., The Book of Mormon—Message and Evidences (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1953), p. 133.
a protracted war he also presided over a large contingent of the Nephite army, being successful in turning the tide of battle on more than one occasion. Shiblon succeeded Helaman as keeper of the records, and probably as seer and high priest (63:1).

Certain later effects of Alma's ministry to his sons were seen in passages such as Helaman 4:21, where the author stated that the people started to repent a little bit and "began to remember the prophecies of Alma." One of these prophecies might well have been the one contained in the discourse given to Helaman (Alma 37:27-34). An even stronger relationship was seen in the prophecy in Alma 9:1-25. A second later effect was referred to in two passages (Alma 63:12; Helaman 6:25-26). Both spoke of Alma's command to Helaman that he not make known the secret oaths and covenants contained in the twenty-four gold plates of Ether, the record of the fallen Jaredite nation.1 Acting in accordance with Alma's command to keep the Jaredite record that their wicked works and abominations might "be made manifest" unto the Nephites (Alma 37:21), Helaman apparently published it along with all of the other sacred records (Alma 63:12). He held back only those parts which Alma had commanded him to keep hidden, including their oaths, covenants, signs, and wonders (37:27). Thus he was responsive to his father's command, and Alma's efforts had been successful.

1Alma 37:21-29; Mosiah 8:9; 28:11-17; Ether 1-2.
(16) Leaving His Final Blessings and a Prophecy (Alma 45:1-19)

Not long after he had given his sons the instructions discussed in the preceding problem, Alma approached Helaman to give him some final instructions, a prophecy, and a blessing. Inasmuch as this situation was somewhat similar to the earlier one, many of the qualifications which were displayed there applied in this problem also.

Alma's first approach to Helaman was to determine how much he believed in the former teachings and commandments which he had given him (Alma 45:2-8). This method of interviewing and his rhetorical questions were frequent tools used by Alma in handling many of his problems. Here it brought forth a satisfactory response from Helaman, and Alma felt to bless him and promise him that the Lord would prosper him in the land (45:8).

Filled with the spirit of prophecy (45:9), Alma then foretold the final apostasy and fall of the Nephites, but told Helaman that this was not to be disclosed until the prophecy had been fulfilled (45:9). This prophecy of destruction because of iniquity (45:14) was in direct contrast to the promise Alma had just given to Helaman, namely that he would be prospered in the land because of righteousness (45:7-8).

Alma showed further that he loved his sons, and the other righteous on the earth, by leaving special blessings on Helaman, his other sons, on the Church, and on the earth for the righteous' sake (45:15, 17). His authority as seer and high priest empowered him to do this.
The teachings which Alma emphasized, as recorded by the text of this problem, were directly relevant to Helaman's situation, and pertinent to the later condition of the Nephites. He made no reference to former prophets in these teachings. His language ability was essentially simple and practical, but with some abstractions. The specific visual images which he called to mind were these: "works of darkness; seed; light; tongue."

No immediate response to Alma's words and actions was noted in the text. The prophecies were later fulfilled completely, however. The Lord thus verified Alma's words. Helaman, on his part, evidently kept the prophecy secret, as Alma had bidden (Alma 63:12-13). Alma, like Lehi before him, evidently knew that the end of his life on earth was near. He therefore desired at that time to give his final blessing and instructions. He was more fortunate than Lehi, however, in the sense that all of his sons obeyed his final commandments, whereas two of Lehi's did not.

Later effects of Alma's efforts with his sons were seen in the fact that his posterity exerted a significant impact for righteousness upon the Nephites and Lamanites for over four hundred years, Ammaron being his last known descendant (321 A.D.) Counting from Alma's father, Alma the Elder, "nine generations of this notable family gave the world no fewer than fifteen faithful and mighty men of affairs, each under the Lord playing a decisive role in the great events of his day ..."¹ Each generation in turn served as Church

historian, Helaman having received the records when Nephihah, the chief judge, refused the responsibility (Alma 50:38).

Further later effects of Alma's own personal life, summed up here at the conclusion of his last problem, were seen in Mormon's statement that Alma was a man of God (Alma 48:18). Especially significant in this regard, although not described in detail, was the account which indicated that Alma had apparently been taken up by the Spirit of the Lord, leaving no information regarding death or burial (Alma 45:18-19). In this the passage compared Alma with Moses. President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote that "it is a very reasonable thought to believe that both Moses and Alma, like Elijah and John, were translated to accomplish some work which the Lord had in store for them at some future day." In this connection, Alma's "psalm" (Alma 29:1-9) became particularly meaningful as an indication of how effective he was as a missionary. His yearning to do missionary work was so great that the Lord possibly extended his ministry beyond his normal life-span. Although Alma felt some sort of embarrassment or sorrow at his desire to be like an angel (Alma 29:1-8), just as did three later Nephites who desired much the same thing (3 Nephi 28:4-8), his desire was evidently granted. One of Alma's descendants, Nephi the son of Helaman, disappeared in a manner implying translation (3 Nephi 1:2-3; 2:9);¹ and three others

¹Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, V (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1966), 38. One assignment carried out by Moses in modern times was described in D&C 110:11.

of his posterity who were chosen among the Nephite twelve disciples (Nephi, Timothy, and Jonas) might possibly have been some or all of the three disciples chosen to tarry (3 Nephi 19:4). The conclusion to be drawn from all of this was that Alma's efforts were successful beyond man's comprehension at the present time.

SUMMARY

The problems of Alma's life have been analyzed in this chapter in relation to the six minor hypotheses of this study. In all of the sixteen specific problems identified, Alma exhibited beneficial and adequate qualifications. His teachings were observed to be relevant in all problems where emphasized teachings were discovered. Six of the problems, however, presented no emphasized teachings, and one problem contained teachings addressed solely to later generations. All of his endeavors were classed as successful in the sense of meeting the Lord's approval. The acceptance of his efforts by the people varied greatly: many were converted, but others became more hardened in their wickedness and cast out the converts. Alma's personal efforts as chief judge, high priest and missionary, historian, general, and father all resulted in notable successes even when weighed against some tragedies which the people brought upon themselves. He was particularly successful in enforcing the laws, trying offenders, and providing spiritual leadership in military affairs. One of his greatest successes was in generating a reform movement.

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1 See Table 1 in chapter 1.  
2 Appendix D lists the teachings.
throughout the Church, coupled with very successful missionary work among unbelievers. Perhaps his greatest success was in reclaiming one of his lost sons, thus leaving a family who were all dedicated to righteousness. Only one later effect was noticed among the first thirteen problems of Alma's life, but several were observed in the last three. This seemed to imply that Mormon, as editor, had devoted so many pages to a treatment of Alma's life that he felt it unnecessary to include comments later on in the text. Alma's contributions toward fulfilling the major purposes of the Book of Mormon were sizeable. Eight of the problems touched on a large number of the purposes, four of them dealt with several purposes, and four of them fulfilled only a few purposes. Every one of the eleven major purposes was touched on by at least one problem. The problems which contained emphasized teachings addressed to Alma's contemporaries, ranked highest in fulfilling a large number of purposes. On the other hand, those problems which were chiefly historical in nature fulfilled fewer purposes. The findings regarding the problems are tabulated, in relation to the six minor hypotheses, on the following page.

Since the purpose of the minor hypotheses is to provide specific data for answering the two major hypotheses, the conclusions presented in this summary are integrated into chapter 7 below, which evaluates the total study in relation to the major hypotheses.
Table 5

Alma--Data Summary on Minor Hypotheses

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Being converted from idolatry</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>became a diligent missionary for Christ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6789 11 (very many)</td>
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<td>2. Serving as historian</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>kept good record, passed it on</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 6 (few)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Serving as high priest and chief judge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>promoted peace; met all challenges</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Trying the case of Nehor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Nehor slain; law enforced and wicked kept still</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 9 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Overcoming the Amlicite rebellion</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>won two battles; sent army to win a third</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 6 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Coping with post-war wickedness</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>wickedness came into Church; Alma turned to ministry, reform</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6 9 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reforming the Church at Zarahemla</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Church put in order; wicked cut off; converts joined</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3456 9 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reforming the Church at Gideon</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>people believed; many baptisms—also at Melek</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6789 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Performing mission to Ammonihah</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>converts cast out, burned; Alma imprisoned; freed by Lord</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6 89 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Ministering to Zeezrom, Amulek, and the people at Sidom</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Zeezrom healed, converted; other baptisms; Amulek comforted</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Prophesying and ministering to his people</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>captives brought back; Church well-established</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 34 6 8910 (very many)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Assisting the people of Ammon</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for later generations)</td>
<td>Nephites accepted Ammonites, defended them</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 10 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Trying the case of Korihor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Korihor cursed, killed; followers reconverted</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3456 89 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Leading a mission to the Zoramites</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>many converts cast out; wicked joined Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 31:6</td>
<td>1 3456 89 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Giving assignments and teachings to his son; sending them to preach</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Corianton repented; Alma's sons preached, did their duty, kept records</td>
<td>Alma 63:12; Helaman 4:21; Helaman 6:25-26</td>
<td>1234567891011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Leaving his final blessings and a prophecy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>gave blessings; his prophecies were fulfilled</td>
<td>Alma 45:18-19; Alma 48:18</td>
<td>1 34 6 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aSee Appendix B for list of teachings, with references.

bFor list of major purposes see p. 20.
Chapter 6

MORMON--DISCIPLE, HISTORIAN, AND GENERAL

The disciples of Jesus Christ presided over the fourth era of Nephite history, as classified in this work. It might be termed the Reign of the Disciples. From 34 A.D. until at least 421 A.D., disciples of Jesus Christ, holding the office of apostle, led their people in religious matters, but apparently also in all other considerations--political, military, economic, and so on. This was clearly observed in the life of Mormon, the subject of this chapter. He was the last Nephite disciple with that title, at least according to the record (3 Nephi 5:13).

\[\text{A SYNOPSIS OF MORMON'S LIFE}\]

Mormon, the son of Mormon, was a pure descendant of Lehi through Nephi (Mormon 1:5; 3 Nephi 5:20). Called to the position of Nephite historian at the age of about ten, he did not actually begin writing until around age twenty-four (Mormon 1:2-3). The only contemporary prophets or Church leaders of record were Ammaron, who called him shortly before his death, and his son Moroni, of whose call more will be said later. Mormon served apparently in both the

\[\text{1Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, I (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957), pp. 121-22.}\]
lands of the north and the south in the role of prophet and general of the Nephite armies until the great and final battle at Cumorah in the year 385 A.D. Sometime between that date and 401 A.D. he died at the hands of the Lamanites, to whose posterity he had dedicated his great spiritual literature (Mormon 8:3).

Having a ministry which dealt with two periods of time--his own, and ours--Mormon faced a wide variety of problems.¹ This arose from his call by the Lord to write an abridged Nephite history, addressed to future generations. The next section of this chapter, which treats the problems pertaining to his own time, discusses only those emphasized teachings which actually reached the eyes or ears of his contemporaries. Following that is a third separate section handling teachings which sprang from his abridging efforts and were thus aimed at modern readers.

Whereas many of those latter teachings were found scattered throughout the entire volume, it was found necessary to categorize and explain why each editorial comment was attributed to Mormon, rather than to the respective author of the book in which it was found. No analysis of those teachings was conducted in connection with the hypotheses of this study. Such would reach beyond the scope of this study when considering Mormon's "second" ministry, his abridgment and editorial work pertaining to the modern era and its problems.

A second deviation from the normal pattern of analysis

¹3 Nephi 5:8-17; Mormon 5:8-14.
occurred in the case of analyzing Mormon's language abilities. With respect to his writings in Mormon 1 through 7, the language characteristics observed were grouped together under two problems, rather than being treated in each problem. This resulted from the fact that these passages were Mormon's abridgment of his own larger writings on the plates of Nephi (Mormon 2:18). Thus, the only detectable time divisions (in terms of when he wrote the portions) were the chapters written before the battle of Cumorah (Mormon 1 to 5), and those written after the battle (6 and 7). His language abilities are therefore discussed in problem twelve (the discussion of the abridgment process), and in problem seventeen (the treatment of the post-battle account).

With the exceptions noted above, the analysis of Mormon's effect and relevance will proceed in accordance with the methods spelled out in chapter one of this study.

Perhaps no other prophet in the Book of Mormon deserves biographical treatment more than does Mormon, for every member of the Church ought to know fully the personality and teachings of the prophet whose name the Lord has allowed to be the byname of all members. The name apparently had much significance for Mormon, as will be shown below. According to a statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith, "The word Mormon, means literally, more good."¹ In this connection it was enlightening to discover that Mormon's only known

¹Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964-66), V, 400, commonly known as and hereafter cited as DHC.
sermon (Moroni 7:5-28) dwelt more in detail on the subject of "good" than any other single sermon or chapter in the entire volume. Furthermore, Moroni, his son, was apparently influenced by this to the extent that he, too, carried on the theme. Although bearing the same name as his father, it was to the land of Mormon, where Alma established the church, that Mormon looked when he thought of his name (3 Nephi 5:12). All of this, together with his early calls to service as mentioned below, was evidence of a righteous family environment in Mormon's parental home.

THE PROBLEMS OF MINISTERING TO A DYING NATION

Of the seventeen problems classified herein, only five of them yielded teachings which apparently had been directed toward the eyes or ears of Mormon's people. All other teachings were intended for later generations, and are discussed in the next section. The problems here are discussed in relation to Mormon's effectiveness and relevance in his major roles as father, disciple, historian, and general.

1 Recording Observations on Plates (Mormon 1:2-14; 2:17-19)

At the tender age of about ten, Mormon received his call to serve as Nephite record keeper and historian (Mormon 1:2). His general qualifications for this call have been broadly alluded to above, but Ammaron the prophet particularly pointed out that Mormon

1 Ether 4:11-12; 8:26; Moroni 10:6, 18, 30.
was sober, and quick to observe (1:2). His becoming "learned somewhat" (1:2) paralleled the comments regarding Nephi, and other prophets of whom this was specifically said (1 Nephi 1:1; Enos 1; Mosiah 1:2; etc.). Ammaron had apparently observed these qualities in Mormon, which suggested that Ammaron had had some close relationship with Mormon.

Mormon's further qualifications to cope with this problem of writing on the plates were observed in such things as the spiritual kinship which he seemed to feel for Nephi (1:5), to which he in part attributed the fact that he obeyed Ammaron's command (cf. 1 Nephi 3:7). At age eleven, Mormon's opportunity of traveling through both major segments of his country--the north and the south--prepared the way for his overall objective evaluation of the people (1:6-7). His close experience with the first war in 300 years undoubtedly aided his perspective.

As to Mormon's actual performance of Ammaron's command, the only evidence found was in the abridgment which Mormon later made of the records which he apparently began writing in about 334 or 335 A.D. Since Mormon at age twenty-four (the year 334 or 335 A.D.) was living in a time of peace, as far as the record showed (2:9-15), there was no military reason why he should not have done as Ammaron commanded him, namely, go to the hill Shim and record on the plates. The passage in Mormon 2:17-18, written concerning his military campaign later on, in the year 345 A.D., actually described in retrospect what he had done back in 334 or 335 A.D. (Assuming that 1:5 and 2:17 were correct in telling that
he had precisely obeyed the words of Ammaron.)

Mormon's style of action and language in carrying out his duty showed themselves in the fact that, though young, he did not shrink from making a full account of all the wickedness of the Nephites (2:18). Judging from the style of his abridgment, his record on the large plates of Nephi must have taken the form of what Dr. Sperry has called "memoirs." His language ability and style at that time, other than being able to read and write reformed Egyptian (9:32), was only visible at a distance through the abridgment. Whether or not Mormon could then read the form of Egyptian written by earlier prophets, such as Nephi, certainly he could do so at the time of his abridgment work (Words of Mormon 3-4; Mormon 9:32).

All other aspects of his language ability which pertain to this problem and the other problems in Mormon, chapters 1 to 5, will be discussed in connection with problem twelve, which treats his abridgment assignment.

His only reference to an earlier prophet quoted the words of Ammaron to him, and said that he had been obedient to this command (1:2-5; 2:17). His effectiveness was seen, although dimly, in the fact that for his later abridgment he apparently turned to and relied upon his former record. At any rate, he fulfilled the assignment (2:18).

No later effects of this problem were specifically noted in the balance of the Book of Mormon. The relationship or contributions

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1Sperry, Compendium, p. 440.
of the problem to the major purposes of the Book of Mormon is detailed in the table at the end of this chapter; this will be true for all the problems and need not be mentioned again in the text of each problem.

2) Preaching to His People
(Mormon 1:15-19)

Continuing in his ways of sobriety (1:15) was apparently a significant part of the qualification which prepared Mormon for a visit from the Lord, and which in turn led him to his next problem—preaching to his wicked people. The Lord evidently called him to declare His word (cf. 3 Nephi 5:13). To recount his successes first—he failed; but it was the failure of his people, not his own (1:16). Peering at his background qualifications for such a ministry revealed that he had perhaps had some acquaintance with the beloved disciples—the three Nephite disciples who were granted an extension of life and ministry (3 Nephi 28:4-9). Mormon had lived in the land of Zarahemla four years before they were removed from mortal eyes, but he and Moroni later testified that they had ministered to him at some unspecified time (3 Nephi 28:26; Mormon 8:11). As mentioned above, Mormon was a disciple himself (3 Nephi 5:13). Although that may have been a generic term for all members, the context of having been called to preach strongly implied that it referred to an office.1 The visit from the Lord strengthened this implication (Mormon 1:15).

1Cf. Alma 45:14. Moroni 7:1 stated that he had a synagogue to preach in, and a congregation of members. From the abridgment one can gather the erroneous impression that he and Moroni alone were members.
This was seen further in the fact that later he was called as an "idle witness" (3:16-19) to bear testimony regarding the destruction of the people (cf. 2 Nephi 33:11-15; 3 Nephi 27:24-27; Moroni 10:34).

The personality trait of not being a quitter appeared strongly in this problem. Mormon remained among his people, though frustrated in his endeavor to preach to them (1:17). He loved them, and his desire was to help them, as he later explained to his son, Moroni (Moroni 9:4-6).

Being qualified to preach requires having some message, and Mormon was well-filled with one: he knew of the goodness of the Lord from first-hand contact (1:15). This first revelation was followed by another, type unspecified, wherein the Lord shut his mouth and forbade him to preach because of the willful wickedness and rebellion of the people (1:16-17).

References to former prophets included the mention of Abinadi and Samuel the Lamanite, whose prophecies were even then being more nearly fulfilled (1:19).  

Again, regarding Mormon's success or lack of it, the Lord was so angry with this rejection of his prophet, and with the people's wickedness, that He cursed the land while the Gadianton robbers flourished (1:17).

No later effects of this problem-assignment were noted in the remainder of the Book of Mormon.

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1 Apparently Mosiah 11:20-25, unless, considering Mosiah 12:8, Mormon was referring to some other unsupplied words of Abinadi; also, apparently Helaman 13:17-23, 30-37 for Samuel the Lamanite.
(3) Teaching Saints in Synagogue
(Moroni 7:1-48)

Mormon's commission to preach, and his only known sermon, might well be considered together. Although the evidence for the date of the sermon was found to be inconclusive, it will be treated at this point, where the preponderance of evidence placed it. Regardless of the date, it was an inspired sermon and provided documentary evidence of Mormon's greatness, indicating why the Lord called him to service at such an early age.

Briefly considered, the factors regarding the dating of the sermon were as follows: The tone of the whole sermon, filled as it is with the only ray of hope in the entire gloomy picture, seemed to fit in better with the early period than at any point beyond Mormon 1:16—especially before Mormon's two epistles (Moroni 8 and 9). Although it might be placed with the cry to repentance which Mormon issued to the people in general (3:2-3), since they hardened their hearts and willfully rebelled and it was in vain, it seemed to fit better in an earlier period, when the saints were meek (Moroni 7:4, 5, 39). The message of his sermon to them differed radically from that of Mormon 3:2-3, which was to repent, be baptized, and be saved.

Perhaps the most definitive clue was Moroni 7:37-38, which mentioned twice, "if these things [spiritual gifts or miracles] have ceased," followed in verse 39 by the statement that Mormon judged better things of them, i.e., that the members had faith and still had the spiritual gifts and miracles. This joined remarkably well
with Mormon 1:13-17.

Turning now toward a consideration of Mormon's qualifications to preach his sermon to the congregation, numerous clues suggested the humility of his character and his love of his brethren (Moroni 7:2). Through frequent quotations from scripture, Mormon made it clear that he knew and used the word of the Lord. He was sensitive to and observant of the meek and peaceable ways of the saints (7:3-4; 39). His desire was to lead them to good, and to show them how to judge between good and evil (7:16). He urged them not to judge wrongfully (7:18), and his entire message was very spiritual and uplifting. As to the types of revelation received, Mormon merely alluded briefly to his calling (7:2), but he also spoke with authority, which indicated that the Holy Spirit was with him.

The teaching methods which were applied in the sermon included words and techniques such as "show" (7:16), "urge" (7:18), and "beseech" (7:19). The sermon was particularly rich in rhetorical questioning (7:20, 27-29, 35-37, 40-41). Mormon quoted numerous statements from the Savior, discoursed on various topics, and used some examples to enrich his sermon.

One of the most interesting aspects observed was the manner in which Mormon introduced a concept, went on to a second one, looped back to touch on the first one again, went on to a third, returned to tie in with the first or second, etc. This was observed and charted, being visible for the first thirteen out of eighteen emphasized teachings in the sermon. This writer would call it a spiral or helix—a method of review and verbal lockstitching. Another way
of describing it would be that he sprinkled a concept in two or more verses at various points in the sermon, then did the same for another, and so on, but ever spiraling closer toward the end. This phenomenon was just as clearly observable in both of his letters to his son, Moroni (Moroni 8 and 9).

In looking at Mormon's language style, it became apparent that he spoke primarily in conceptual abstractions, using simple, not symbolic, language. A number of concrete images were called forth, however: "bitter fountain, peaceable walk, earth, gift, daylight, and dark night."

His only reference to another prophet or authority was to Jesus Christ (bearing in mind, however, the possibility of some similarities to Paul or some other unknown source). It was also observed that in one verse (7:21) Mormon referred back to something earlier in the sermon--but Moroni apparently did not have, or abridged out, the antecedent part! A look back at verse 1 also revealed that Moroni intended only to give a "few" of his father's words on faith, hope, and charity--implying that the sermon was abbreviated. Such as it is now it would not be a lengthy talk by modern standards.

A most difficult task in analyzing this problem lay in determining the relevance of the teachings in relation to the situation: absolutely no situation was described. A summary of his teachings will suffice at this point, therefore. The first portion of the sermon focused on the topic of "good," what a good man does, and how to judge between good and evil. He emphasized that all good is from God, and then turned to the second phase of the sermon by
showing how "faith" in Christ is the means of obtaining all good. Step by step he then linked faith, hope, and charity together, with a final emphasis on charity as the pure love of Christ, the greatest attribute of all. Each individually emphasized teaching or concept is detailed in the table at the end of this chapter.

Lacking knowledge of the problem which the sermon was directed to solve, it was not possible to determine the success achieved. No evidence was observed regarding success, unless one would wish to link it to the general deterioration of the nation, suggesting that even the members turned away.

Later effects of this sermon were detected, however, in the simple fact that Moroni thought well enough of it to quote it. Moroni himself taught a great deal on faith, hope, and charity (Ether 12:6-37). In this he seemed to have been strongly influenced by his father's teachings. The total absence of spiritual gifts in their time evidently motivated both of them to teach such doctrines (Mormon 1:13-14).

(4) Leading Nephite Armies
(Mormon 2:1-9)

The question of being uniquely qualified for an assignment found interesting answers in the case of this problem. The Nephite custom had apparently always been, at least in their times of righteousness, to choose as their military commanders those who had the spirit of revelation and prophecy (3 Nephi 3:19). Although Mormon's people

1"Emphasized teachings" as defined in Criteria for Analyzing Data, in chapter 1.
were rapidly degenerating, they evidently had sense enough in 326 A.D. to choose as their general the only prophet or disciple of Christ left among them—the fifteen year old lad named Mormon. Since he was large in stature (Mormon 2:1), his age did not deter them from calling him; but surely his true qualification lay in his spiritual prowess, which demonstrated his leadership ability.

At that point the record was very thin, but one other implication came, namely, that Mormon was possibly also their political leader, as well as historian, church leader, and general (2:1; cf. 3:11). He used the words "leader, or the leader of their armies," and later, "a commander and a leader of this people." Since no other political structure was mentioned, the strong possibility remained that in some measure the reign of disciples still continued, with Mormon the only theocratic candidate in the field. As Cazier has shown, among the Nephites "the role of government was primarily national defense and the punishment of crime, not social reform."¹ He and Dr. Sperry both have suggested that the military appeared to be the only form of government in the latter days of the Nephite nation.² Although under the reign of the disciples, from 34 A.D. onward, there may have been political leaders elected, or appointed and sustained by the voice of the people, the disciples presided over all in a theocratic form of government, as Cazier and others


²Cazier, pp. 222-23; also Sperry, Compendium, p. 543.
have demonstrated.\(^1\) When the beloved disciples were taken away, Mormon was immediately called by the Lord as a prophet and witness of Christ (Mormon 1:15-16), which left Mormon, visibly, with the other three roles of political leader, church historian, and general. In this he resembled Nephi the son of Lehi, Benjamin, and Alma the son of Alma.

Mormon's statement that the war resulted in a total revolution throughout the land (2:8) was an index to the fragile state of the Nephite government. Despite that, his character shone forth, exhibiting the quality of persistence even when losing, and enduring unto final success (2:3-9).

His style of action as youthful military general--retreating, and not being able to prevent his army from being frightened and refusing to fight (2:3-4)--has led at least one writer to assume that Mormon was too inexperienced or not as great a general as Captain Moroni in the Book of Alma. Monson surmised that he lacked strategic resourcefulness.\(^2\) This appeared to be a shortsighted evaluation of the evidence. Although he conceded that Mormon was working with a more wicked class of Nephites, he failed to consider the fact that Mormon--even working with such a disreputable army--succeeded in winning three major wars, which was one more than Captain Moroni won (Mormon 3:13; to be demonstrated in detail below). Furthermore,

\(^1\)Cazier, pp. 213-17.

Mormon's skillful retreats, falling back to his defenses-in-depth, his successful fortifications, as seen in his later war efforts, and his resourcefulness in gathering all the recruits possible—all of these argued to his defense as a great general. These matters will be magnified in detail below in further problems (#'s 6, 9, 11, 14, 16, and 17). At this juncture suffice it to say that Mormon was not an inept general in his first campaign. Obviously the greatest evidence for that is that he won the war, and that with an inferior-sized army (2:9, in context of 3:13).

Mormon did not describe his military methods in such detail as he had described Captain Moroni's, making it difficult to judge as to his true initiative and strategy. The real key of Captain Moroni's success lay in his inspiration and the worthiness of the people (Alma 59:9-13). When they were not worthy, he lost also. How much more so with Mormon! Mormon may have had abundant personal inspiration, but the Lord was not going to reveal success to a wicked populace.

Since he was in Zarahemla, the capitol, and at the head of the "armies" (1:6; 2:1), it appeared that Mormon was not merely the general over a small local war. Despite the fact that the Nephites were scattered widely, even into the sparsely populated north country (1:6-7), the total thrust of the Lamanite invasion struck near Zarahemla. Mormon was thus leading the national army of the Nephites, small though it was after 300 years of peace and one brief war (1:8-12). Any foreign attack on a nation, such as in World War II, for an example, automatically puts the entire political organism in a
state of war, no matter how widely dispersed or how small the army
of resistance.

No teachings directed to his contemporaries were reported
by Mormon at this point. No later effects of this problem-assignment
were noted by Moroni, the only subsequent author in the book. In
conclusion, and in retrospect, Mormon's success in winning the war
identified him as a general capable of winning, though in his youth
and in command of a wicked and outnumbered army. Axiomatically,
there must have been sufficient righteous or partially-righteous
people still remaining among the Nephites to justify the Lord's
coming to their rescue (cf. Mormon 3:3). This must have been marginal,
however, for after sparing them the second and third times, the Lord
gave up and consigned them to their destruction.

(5) Feeling Joy, Sorrow, over
His People (Mormon 2:10-15)

The next problem Mormon faced was an internal, emotional
one. He began to rejoice as he saw a seeming repentance on the
part of his people; when their repentance did not turn out to be
oriented toward God but toward damnation, Mormon's sorrow returned
to him.

True qualifications would be necessary to have such feelings
about one's people. In Mormon's case the evidence indicated that,
having worked toward their salvation for seventeen years (2:2, 15),
he was justified in experiencing these feelings. His attitude was
ever positive, and desirous for their welfare, as later statements
verified (3:12; Moroni 9:4-6).

Particularly poignant were his comments that his people began
to cry because of the severity of their afflictions (slippery treasures, prevalence of thieves, magic, etc.), all in fulfillment of Samuel the Lamanite's prophecy, to which he again alluded (2:10).

No teachings directed toward his people were included in the text.

As Mormon had been forbidden to teach the wicked, there was no evidence that he interacted with them at the time of his strong feelings. Based on Moroni 9:4-6, however, he was always one to labor with them in whatever ways would help. In any event, the response from the people was certain, as they continued to sorrow, curse God, and die by the sword (2:13-14). Again, no later effects were noted in Moroni's writings.

(6) Leading Second Military Campaign (Mormon 2:16-29)

If Mormon 3:13 has been correctly interpreted to mean that Mormon delivered his people from three wars or campaigns, then Mormon 2:16 must be saying that the second of these campaigns began in about 344 or 345 A.D. Whether a total peace, or minor skirmishes existed from the time of the Nephite victory in 330 A.D. until 344 A.D., was not mentioned in the record.

Mormon's problem (for he was apparently still at the military helm) seemingly began in a rout and climaxed to a panic-stricken flight of his people from one defeat to another. He had difficulty stopping the retreat (2:16, 20), which led progressively northward.

As to Mormon's qualifications at this stage of his life, the account plainly stated that the people continued in wickedness and Mormon saw that their day of grace was past, temporally and
spiritually (2:15, 18, 19)—all leading to a statement indicating that Mormon continually sorrowed for his people (2:19). In the midst of this gloom and despair, it was singular to note the firmness and boldness exhibited by Mormon in his urging them "with great energy, that they would stand boldly before the Lamanites" (2:23). True pertinacity of character. He had one war for background experience, and he knew that success could come if they exerted enough faith. The problem was the object in which they placed their faith.

The teaching methods exhibited by Mormon, as he urged his people to arouse themselves, were noteworthy, for he challenged them to exert faith in the best things which, in his view, they were then capable of having faith in: the importance of their wives, children, houses and homes. How striking it was to note the contrast between this exhortation and similar ones made earlier by Captain Moroni to his people, who were still able to rally themselves not only for the above-mentioned things, but above all for their God, their religion, their freedom, and their peace (Alma 46:12). Given the conditions of Mormon's people, his teachings to them at that time were singularly relevant. That one exhortation was the only teaching directed to his people during this problem, according to the present record. It was especially relevant for the long-time residents of the city and land of Shem (2:21).

Mormon's successes, and the response of his people, were of "mixed colors." On the bright side, he reported that his words only aroused them "somewhat to vigor," at least so they would not flee as
Mormon's effectiveness in coping with this problem may be seen in the fact that the treaty seemingly settled claims to disputed lands. Population shifts had occurred during the war (2:16, 20, 21), and a relocation of official boundaries was in order. The mutual "giving" of land (2:29) accomplished this boundary change, perhaps even to the extent of relocating Lamanites or Nephites caught on the enemy side of the new line. This would be a fair conclusion, for the end of the war found the Nephites, as mentioned above, residing in "the lands of their inheritance" (2:27). Surely they would not then have vacated their own property, newly retaken in a war in which they were victorious over the invaders, were they not still in a precarious position. A clear line of demarcation was needed. Nephite holdings south of the narrow passage must have been exchanged for something, such as peace, prisoners, or Lamanite lands in the north.

The treaty was no sure guarantee to peace, Mormon knew, for he spent his next ten years preparing his people "against the time of battle" (3:1). He expected war in spite of any treaty. The treaty was of some value, however, for the Lamanites wanted the Nephites out of the south, and the Nephites wanted the Lamanites out of the north. Thus the battle line was drawn at the narrow passage (2:29), buying the Nephites some time.

As a final note to this problem, no later effects of the problem were seen in the writings of Moroni.
Writing an Epistle against Infant Baptism (Moroni 8:2-30)

The next problem faced by the prophet Mormon was one which arose within the ministry of his son, Moroni, shortly after Moroni's call to the ministry (8:1). In some way Mormon had learned that some church members were advocating, if not practicing, infant baptism (8:4). As the Lord's prophet, he wrote an epistle to his son, urging him to correct the erroneous teaching. It appeared possible that Moroni was a missionary, but more probable that he had been called as a disciple, an apostle. This was deduced from one fact, among others, that at no other place in the record was any mention made of his call. From a careful study of passages listed in Reynold's Concordance, it was found that "ministry" in nearly all cases in the Book of Mormon had reference to presiding officers and their functions, with very few cases referring specifically to pure missionary work. Inasmuch as Mormon had been restrained from proselyting, it seemed somewhat improbable that Moroni would have been permitted to do so.

Mormon had been called as a youth to be a special witness for Christ, which made it seem likely that Moroni would have received the same distinction at a similar early age, as will be shown below. Since Moroni definitely was visited by the Lord, and on more than one occasion received communication from him (e.g., Ether 12:39), and was also historian and record keeper near his father's death, he was in fact a prophet and a special witness.

The date of the epistle and the earliness of Moroni's call went hand in hand. From evidence both in and outside of the epistle,
the date which seemed best to fit the facts was about 345 A.D.,
within the framework of Mormon 2:13-16. Mormon was about thirty-
four or thirty-five in the year 345 A.D., (cf. Mormon 1:6), making
it possible for Moroni to be in his teens. Although that would have
made Moroni about ninety in 421 A.D., such was not unheard of among
Book of Mormon historians (cf. 4 Nephi 18-24, 47). A brief summary
follows regarding the evidence for the dating of the epistle, and
thus of Moroni's call.

The epistle in Moroni chapter 9, the second one to Moroni
from his father, presented the better dating information of the two
epistles, and in fact was the only very precise means of dating
the first one. In the first epistle was the promise of a second
one, most likely the very one in chapter nine, judging from its
contents. For example, 8:28 and 9:4 in Moroni both told of Mormon's
fears that perhaps the Holy Spirit had ceased striving with his
people. And it was this point which seemed the strongest indicator
linking the two epistles to a point before Mormon 3:15 (a peacetime
period), and thus logically back to Mormon 2:13-16 (the next-
earlier war in which the Nephites lost battles).

Mormon 3:15 described the time at which the Lord had aban-
doned the Nephites to their enemies because of offensive, aggressive
warfare. The conclusion drawn from this was that the Lord's
Spirit could not have been striving with the Nephites if the Lord
had abandoned them in such final terms as stated to Mormon, and
reported by him in 3:15. That Mormon at any later time could have
wondered if the Spirit were still striving with his people, as
Moroni 9:4 stated, appeared untenable. Earlier he had seen that, not having the Spirit, they could not properly repent (Mormon 2:10-14). The thorough absence of the Spirit was described by Mormon in the past tense in 380 A.D. (Mormon 5:16), but in 362 A.D. (Mormon 3:15) the same message came just as strongly as if it had been said explicitly. Thus, the epistles would have to be dated before 362 A.D. in a time of war, a time when the Spirit was still striving with the Nephites.

Numerous other circumstantial similarities seemed to fix the date of the letters around 345 A.D. King Aaron could have been alive for the battles of that year (Mormon 2:9, 10-16), and a Lamanite Aaron was mentioned in the second letter (Moroni 9:17)—the only two places in the record. The second letter described the great evils that Mormon 2:18-19 hid from the reader. Mormon 3:21 and Moroni 9:3, 22 both spoke of fears that the Nephites would be destroyed.

The only other logical possibility, according to the record, would be to date the letters between 380-384 A.D.¹ During that time period Mormon also faced battles in which he did not conquer (Mormon 5:6-7), just as mentioned in the second epistle (Moroni 9:2), but also in Mormon 2:16-21. In addition to the above proofs, however, another major problem with accepting the latter date was the comparison of Mormon 3:15, (or even as late as Mormon 4:23, where the

¹Sperry, Compendium, p. 491.
destruction was certainly foreknown by Mormon), with the uncertain statement in the second letter: ". . . I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people . . . ." (Moroni 9:3; also 9:22.) Further, the thirsting for blood continually (Moroni 9:5) existed at least as early as Mormon 4:11, making an early date within the realm of reason.

The final consideration in the matter of dating the epistles lay in the comment by Mormon that he had some sacred records to deliver to his son, Moroni (Moroni 9:24). This has been generally construed to refer to the abridgment which Mormon handed over just prior to the battle at Cumorah (Mormon 6:6). On the other hand, another circumstantial similarity was observed in Mormon 2:16-18. Having lost a battle (just as in the second letter), Mormon found himself near the Hill Shim, which he mentioned in almost a casual way as he went on to describe how he had gone to the hill ten years before to begin his record on the plates of Nephi. Being near the hill that second time, however, would have provided an opportunity to obtain records which he might have then intended to deliver to Moroni. Otherwise why even mention the second occasion? In the abridged account now available, Mormon failed to mention any such extraction, for his first visit was more important to chronicle. On the other hand, he did not even include his epistle in his record, so another omission regarding the same event should not be thought too unusual. This is mentioned here merely to show the feasibility of the earlier dating, whereas the first arguments above demonstrated its necessity.
As mentioned in connection with Mormon's sermon, the epistles and the sermon are considered at their respective points in this chapter from the fact that the preponderance of evidence suggested putting them there. Obviously, Mormon did not arrive at the great wisdom of his later years in one sudden, accelerating moment. These documents from his earlier years illustrated that his true greatness was progressively becoming more apparent, linked by increasing contrast to the decline of his nation.

Mormon's first epistle, a pastoral expression of love for his son, and for his people, revealed the quality of love in the soul of Mormon (Moroni 8:1-3, 30). He loved children (8:17). This, and the other qualifications analyzed below, revealed that Mormon was very sensitive and concerned about people, as well as about their keeping the commandments.

Regarding these qualifications for dealing with the problem, the next one noticed was his tact (as well as fatherly love and rejoicing) in complimenting Moroni on his call to the ministry before announcing the problem, the main purpose for writing the epistle (8:2-6). Further, he revealed that he was grieved at disputations over matters of doctrine. He knew that contentions had been the source of the Nephite wars in the past, and were denounced most vehemently by the Savior at his appearance (Alma 50:21; 3 Nephi 11:28-30). This was doubtlessly in the forefront of his thinking, judging from the fact that he anticipated the necessity of going out again to battle shortly thereafter (8:27). His desire was to put down contentions at the center of the country before going
against the outside enemy, just as Captain Moroni had done (Alma 60:15, 23, 25-30).

Such were the character traits and background experiences of Mormon as he confronted this problem. The evidence of direct revelation, qualifying him to meet the challenge, was apparent, for he said the word of the Lord came to him through the power of the Holy Ghost (8:7, 9).

His manner of action, or his teaching method, led him to urge Moroni to "labor diligently, that this gross error should be removed" (8:6). Vigorous and decisive efforts seemed to characterize Mormon. This was seen also in the way in which he immediately approached the Lord on the subject when first hearing of the crisis (8:7). His forceful declarations, following the brief one-verse statement by the Lord, expounded the true doctrine of baptism, and opposed the false doctrine of infant baptism. These declarations stand among the most powerful pronouncements of all scripture. His statements were strong, direct, and plain, and were filled with the boldness of the authority of God as he warned of evil. His method was likewise positive, as he urged upon Moroni that which he should teach (8:10), and requested him to pray for the Nephites that they might repent (8:28). His own love for his people shone through again as he expressed the concern that perhaps the Spirit had ceased striving with them (8:28).

The language ability expressed in this epistle was nearly devoid of symbolism. The terminology was simple, packaged primarily in abstractions with just a few concrete images: "the whole
needing no physician; baptism; circumcision; gall; bonds; and first fruits." Once again his striking use of the spiral or helical method of intertwining and reviewing principles was apparent.

The only reference to another, earlier prophet was to Adam (8:8).

No later comments seemed to divulge in any manner how successful Mormon's epistle was, or what success Moroni had. The extremely strong inference was gained, however, that Moroni felt the epistle was successful, for he thought highly enough of it to include it in his addenda to the book. The epistle pertained in part to Moroni's ministry, but the inclusion of it paid tribute to Mormon. The fact that Moroni did pass it on to future generations suggested that he esteemed it to be of worth for our time. The teachings of the epistle were discussed at this point, however, instead of in connection with Mormon's writings directed solely toward later generations.

(8) Writing an Epistle to Report
War; Encouraging Moroni
(Moroni 9:1-26)

The second epistle to Moroni continued to exhibit the loving concern of Mormon for his son, both temporally and spiritually. In this he truly resembled Lehi, Jacob, Benjamin, the two Alma's, and Helaman--other great fathers in the Book of Mormon who took the time to counsel and train their sons.¹ The purposes of the epistle were evidently to let Moroni know that his father was yet alive, to report

¹1 Nephi 8, 10; 2 Nephi 1 to 4; Enos 1-3; Mosiah 1: Alma 27:14-23; Alma 37 to 42; Helaman 5:5-14.
the grave situation of the nation, and to encourage Moroni in spirit that he might have the ability to endure in his difficult ministry. (9:1, 3, 6). A further, dual purpose was apparently to request Moroni to write a few things on the sacred records if Mormon were killed, and to inform him that he had sacred records to deliver to him (9:24). Numerous characteristics seemed to qualify him for these tasks.

Mormon's own dedication of character and diligence in laboring with his people resulted in his petitioning Moroni to "labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation." (9:6). His chaste view of morality resulted in decrying the barbarous morals of some Nephite soldiers (9:9). These and other qualities showed that Mormon loved everything good, whereas his people would "delight in everything save that which is good." (9:19). Stating in positive terms the things he stood for (the opposite, or negative, of which he sadly observed among his contemporaries), he delighted in repentance (9:3), love (9:4), order (9:18), mercy (9:18), and principle (9:20). He likewise was tenderhearted at the loss of his compatriots, whom he valued as "choice" (9:2). In this he demonstrated concern for the individual, just as he did in his feelings toward his son. Again, he was grieved at the sufferings of his people (9:7-10, 16-17) and at their gross sins. These qualities demonstrated that Mormon was capable of speaking out on the subject from a platform of personal virtue, an absolute necessity for coping with a problem of this nature.

The prophet's actions and teaching methods showed themselves
in his desire to labor continually with his people (9:4), but also in the sharpness or mildness with which he was capable of speaking to his hardened soldiers (9:4). Having been grieved exceedingly at their wickedness, he even prayed for the righteous judgments of God to come upon the wicked Nephites, his own people (9:11-15).

With respect to his son, Mormon prayed for his survival as a witness—either of the return of the Nephites to righteousness, or of their utter destruction (9:22). He recommended his son to God, which he could not do for the people as a whole (9:21-22). As mentioned, he urged Moroni to labor diligently with the people, and to write something to future generations if he were spared (9:6, 24). Finally, he gave an exhortation to be faithful unto the end, and not to mourn over wickedness but to focus upon the good things of Christ (9:25-26).

As to his language ability in handling this problem, Mormon's style of writing was definitely filled with a tone of mourning, yet still capable of offering comfort and encouragement to Moroni. The wording was simple and largely practical, but with some abstractions and a few symbols—"tabernacle of clay; hand; blood; throne."

Mormon made no references to other prophets.

Moroni's response to the epistle showed that it had been a success. He did remain faithful to the end of the nation, and then to the end of his life. Mormon's request in Moroni 9:24 was carried out: Moroni wrote some words to future generations, noting that he did this in fulfillment of the command of his father (Mormon 8:1).

Beyond that, a later effect of this problem (Mormon's epistle)
was observed in the fact that Moroni valued it so much for its spiritual qualities that he included it with his writings on the plates.

(9) Preparing Nephites for Future War (Mormon 3:1)

Though briefly stated in one verse, this problem occupied Mormon during ten years of his ministry. His challenge was to prepare his people for the future war which he knew to be inevitable due to the wickedness of the Nephites and the hardness of the Lamanites.

The qualification of preparedness must rank very high on the list of any successful military general. The fact that Mormon was concerned about this issue spoke well for him. The fact that he had succeeded in making a treaty with the Lamanites seemingly did not lull Mormon into complacency. He knew from the Jaredite record (Ether 4:1) that the only way to appease an enemy was to allow oneself to be defeated (Ether 15:4-5). With a background of two military campaigns, he set to work preparing both the needed armament and the fortification of their lands.

No teachings, no references to former prophets, and no later effects in the writings of Moroni were noted regarding this problem.

The success of his enterprise was plainly exhibited in the next war, to be discussed in detail below. Simply stated, in two battles within two years the Nephites succeeded in defeating the Lamanites, causing them to return to their lands (3:6-8).
Preaching Last Cry to Repentance (Mormon 3:2-3)

Less successful was Mormon's effort during that same ten years to call his people to repentance, the Lord having lifted the interdict against his preaching to the people (cf. 1:16-17). This was their last opportunity to be spared, according to the word of the Lord (3:2).

Consideration of Mormon's qualifications for such a last, exhaustive effort revealed that he was obedient (3:3), and that he showed a willingness to work with what were apparently hardened apostates, surely the toughest missionary work described in the Book of Mormon (cf. Alma 20:30-21:4; 24:29-30). His pertinacity, endurance in trials, and constant inspiration have already been alluded to above. Again he received revelation, for the Lord spoke to him (3:2). All that was recorded of his teaching methods or action style was the fact that he cried the word of the Lord: "Repent ye, and come unto me, and be ye baptized, and build up again my church, and ye shall be spared." (3:2.) This was surely his last preaching effort, and his last message. Remarkably, these same "first principles of the gospel" were the subject of his last editorial (3 Nephi 30:1-2) as well as his last message to future generations (Mormon 7:8-10).

No references to former prophets, and no later effects in the writings of Moroni were discovered in this problem.

The prophet himself clearly declared the results of his efforts. They failed to see that the Lord had spared them that they might repent. The people, he said, hardened their hearts
against the Lord, and his efforts were in vain (3:3). In this he resembled the Biblical Noah, and Ether; and his people resembled their people,¹ the two former civilizations destroyed upon the land of promise.²

Leading Third Military Campaign (Mormon 3:4-8)

Following the ten years of military preparation, and Mormon's crying repentance, the king of the Lamanites sent Mormon an epistle informing him of his next problem: war with the Lamanites, on the Nephites' home ground.

Mormon's qualifications to cope with this problem have been discussed in problems ten and eleven. No more were discovered in the actual text of this problem. His action style was decisive and clear, for he gathered his people, evidently from a large area, to the land of Desolation, to the city of Desolation (3:5, 7). There he caused that they should fortify against the Lamanites (evidently final preparations, as compared to the ten-year period of preparation) (3:6). They defeated two successive invasions within the space of two years, even to the extent that the Lamanites returned to their own lands.

Few details were offered by Mormon at this point. No teachings,

¹ Cf. Genesis 5:5; see also The Pearl of Great Price (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), Moses 8:20; cf. also Ether 12:5; 13:20-22.

² The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956), 117:8, hereafter cited as D&C.
no references to former prophets, and no later effects in the writings of Moroni were discovered.

As to successes on Mormon's part, and responses on the part of the people, this problem appeared to be a thorough triumph--that is, within the verses actually describing the problem. For true results and responses it was necessary to consider this in the larger context of the next problem, however.

(12) Leaving Army to Abridge Nephite Records (Mormon 3: 9-22; 4:1-22)

Because of their great success, the Nephites reversed a tradition held inviolate among them for over five hundred years--that of not going to war aggressively and offensively, but only when commanded to by the Lord (Mosiah 21:6-12; also 3 Nephi 3:21). They chose to go up to battle against the Lamanites. This was the problem presented to Mormon. His response to it was to leave the army. Having been vitally concerned with their welfare to that point, it would certainly not have been an easy thing for him to abandon his efforts to save them. He must have sought to dissuade them from their purpose, if his former activities can be used as a means of judgment. Their increasing lack of responsiveness to his commands has already been mentioned (Moroni 9:4-6). When they persisted, he left.

Following his resignation, which, for all practical purposes, was the end of that problem, the word of the Lord came to him (3:15-16), giving him an assignment as far-reaching as had been the momentous decision made by the aggressive Nephites. Since they had not
perceived that the Lord was He who had spared them (3:3), and that through His inspired prophet He had delivered them from three wars (3:13), and since they had now chosen aggression--the Lord decreed "they shall be cut off from the face of the earth." (3:15.) Further, the Lord called Mormon to stand by idly as a witness of the coming destruction, and to "manifest unto the world" (3:16) the things he observed. In the verses following the Lord commands Mormon outlined the manner in which he would manifest these things to the modern era. "I did even as the Lord had commanded me," he said (3:16), and then continued, "Therefore I write unto you, Gentiles, and also unto you, house of Israel (underlining added) . . ." (3:17), and again, "Yea, behold, I write unto all the ends of the earth . . ." (3:18), and finally, "And I write also unto the remnant of this people . . ." (3:19). In other words, Mormon's assignment was to make the abridgment which has since been brought forth as the entire Book of Mormon--the message to all of those groups of which he spoke. By command of the Lord he began to prepare an abridgment of the history of his people that the same thing would happen of which the Lord had spoken through the prophet Abinadi to an earlier generation of Nephites:

". . . they shall leave a record behind them, and I will preserve them for other nations which shall possess the land; yea, even this will I do that I may discover the abominations of this people to other nations. . . ." (Mosiah 12:8.)

The Lord also told Abinadi that "except they repent I will utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth" (Mosiah 12:8). In Mormon's time the Lord had given them ample chances for repentance, the most recent cry to repentance having been just prior to their last
war (Mormon 3:2). This they had rejected, so on the occasion mentioned above, the Lord's decree was clearly a final one: "because this people repented not after I had delivered them, behold they shall be cut off from the face of the earth" (3:15). (Underlining added.) Thus, the command came to Mormon that he stand as a witness, manifesting through his record, to future generations, the "great and marvelous" destruction of his people, the Nephites (8:7).

Having a break from the military from 362 A.D. until shortly after 375 A.D. (5:1), Mormon would have had ample opportunity to thoroughly digest and abridge the large plates of Nephi. Being an active man (so active, indeed, that in 385 A.D., at the age of about 74, he led his army into battle), but having been forbidden to preach, and refusing to serve in the military, Mormon would certainly have done something significant during that period. If, as is commonly supposed, Mormon waited until just before the battle of Cumorah to write his abridgment, his period of "idle witnessing" was a strangely silent period, as far as any record of his activities is concerned. Furthermore, since the decree regarding the destruction of the Nephites was final, it seemed somewhat unusual that the Lord would have Mormon sit idly by, then wait until the last little while before the battle of Cumorah to have him do his witnessing or testifying. To witness means far more than merely to observe—it also means to bear record of that which has been observed. Mormon was therefore called to do just what Ether had done centuries earlier--prepare an abridged record to hand down to future generations (Ether 13:13-14).
A careful reading of Mormon 5:9 was helpful in establishing more clearly the date for the beginning of the abridgment work. There, Mormon referred to "a commandment" which he had received relative to making his small abridgment. The last such commandment of the Lord which he had mentioned receiving was in Mormon 3:16, the very one referred to in this problem.\(^1\) By contrast, Ammaron's commandment had called him to report merely the period of his own lifetime (1:4).

A further evidence for the early beginning of the abridgment was the fact that Mormon 3:20-22, directly following the commandment to write, expressed the major purposes for the book, as Mormon perceived them. He reiterated these later (5:13-15), and added another point also (7:9). Likewise significant seemed the phenomenon that there were no teachings directed to Mormon's own contemporaries following Mormon 3:2-3. This appeared to demonstrate that from that point henceforth he directed his recorded teachings to future generations.

One final passage required consideration before making any decision regarding the date of beginning the abridgment. That was Mormon 6:6, where the prophet reported, following the battle of Cumorah, that shortly before the battle he had delivered the plates into the hands of his son, Moroni. He also spoke plainly of a command which the Lord had given, which stated that he should not suffer the

\(^1\) 3 Nephi 26:12 also affirmed that Mormon's abridgment work was commanded of God.
plates to fall into the hands of the Lamanites. A careful reading showed that he did not speak of the Lord's commanding him to make an abridgment—although in the same sentence he referred to the fact that he made (past tense) the record, which he had turned over to Moroni before the battle. In short, the evidence did not indicate, as it had in Mormon 3:16, that the Lord was at that time commanding him to make an abridgment. Rather, Mormon said that he knew it was going to be the last struggle of his people (6:6), and then spoke of the record which he made and handed to his son. The mentioning of the preparation of the record came to light, apparently, because of the event of passing on the records. This flashback-summary was found to be typical of Mormon's writings, such as the event discussed above, for example—his first visit to the hill Shim (2:17-18).¹

Noteworthy in this connection was the fact that in Ammon's command to go to the hill Shim, that prophet told Mormon to "take the plates of Nephi unto yourself, and the remainder shall ye leave in the place where they are" (1:4). Thus, Mormon had in his possession the plates of Nephi from which he was to make his abridgment. Later, when the final overthrow of the land was at hand, Mormon returned to the hill and removed "all the records" which Ammon had hidden (4:23). This included many records which Mormon had not used for his abridgment (Helaman 3:13-16; 3 Nephi 5:8-12), for he used only the plates

¹Cf. also Mosiah 9 to 22; Alma 17 to 26; and Mormon 6 and 7.
of Nephi.¹

All of these factors taken together suggested the possible explanation that Mormon began his abridgment work in 362 A.D. but did not complete the entire process of transferring it to plates until the last little while before the battle at Cumorah. This should not seem strange to any historian who has ever undertaken such a mammoth job. The process of writing on plates being rather difficult (Jacob 4:1), it seemed probable that Mormon would have written his notes, rough drafts, and semi-final copy on some other material. With that finished he could then, with a minimum of error, transfer the entirety to plates.

The foregoing discussion confined itself to a statement of the problem and the manner in which it evolved from the first phase into the second, and to a definition of the period of time in which the writing began on the abridgment. Having established these facts, analyzing the problem by means of the minor hypotheses questions is now possible.

Mormon's qualifications for filling his new assignment were visible from a careful look at the text. He was obedient (3:16), leaving the army in order to write something of value to their apostate posterity. Having served for years as record keeper and historian, Mormon knew the records and had had experience writing. He had prayed for his people, but without faith--i.e., hope of

¹The complete library of records--enough to fill many wagons-loads--was apparently that which Oliver Cowdery reported seeing, as recounted by President Brigham Young. Address delivered at Farmington, Utah, June 17, 1877, Journal of Discourses, reporter George F. Gibbs, XIX (London, England, 1878), 38.
success (3:12); now he exerted great faith in the Lord's promise that the records would be brought forth in future years and do much good toward restoring Israel to righteousness (Enos 14-17; 3 Nephi 5:14-15). He had loved his people (3:12); now he served their posterity.

The type of revelation which Mormon received, authorizing him to make the abridgment, was "the voice of the Lord" (3:14). In response to this, his action style, as mentioned above, was an immediate obedience to the Lord's command to be a witness of the things which he saw and heard. In this he received the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who manifested to him the future regarding the house of Israel and the Gentiles (3:17-20), apparently in such a way as to help him know what things to write for their edification and the solving of their problems. (Cf. Words of Mormon 9.)

A further qualification worthy of separate note was observed in a portion of the abridgment record discussed earlier—Mormon 2:19. As reported in that passage, Mormon had received the personal assurance that he would be "lifted up at the last day."

The Book of Mormon term "lifted up" was found by comparison to be an equivalent of the Latter-day Saint expression "exaltation," denoting the highest level of salvation (D&C 131:1-5; 132:15-17, 49). In other words, as Dr. Sperry has noted, Mormon had received the perfect assurance that his calling and election had been made sure. He apparently wrote the statement after the year 362 A.D., at which

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1 Sperry, Compendium, p. 444.
time he began his abridgment work, and sometime before the finishing of the record in 385 A.D. (It was reported in connection with the events described in Mormon 2:19, but seemingly did not refer to that time period, but to the abridgment period.) Thus, he was worthy of the assignment.

Inspecting the teaching or writing methods of Mormon, as used in connection with this problem of the abridgment work, yielded a large amount of information. That resulted from the fact that the entire Book of Mormon was the area of investigation. Specifically, however, the investigation looked at the methods of writing perceived only in passages which bore the visible impress of Mormon's hand. Although he had written most of the entire volume, those parts not directly presented as editorials or abridging details were assumed to have been copied or abridged from the sayings of earlier prophets, albeit largely in Mormon's own words.

The first method noticed, and this in connection with the small Book of Mormon reporting his own lifetime, was the fact that he definitely was abridging or making shorter that which he had written before on the large plates of Nephi. This was observable in the fact that many of the Lord's commands to him were not quoted verbatim, but were paraphrased (Mormon 1:16; 2:18; 5:9; 6:6). The clause "and it came to pass," a typical transition and abridging element throughout historical portions of the entire volume, was also prominent in the abridgment of his own life's record. On the other hand, no "and thus we see" editorials were present, showing that Mormon was originating the material and not copying it from some other author.
In the volume as a whole, Mormon's writing in a third-person style vividly contrasted with the direct, first-person narrative of the small plates writers.¹

Another general observation, regarding the manner in which Mormon viewed his work as the abridger, was that he apparently intended to call his abridged book "The Book of Nephi." This impression was strongly conveyed from his own words (Helaman 2:14), but also from the logic of the fact that an abridged work usually bears the original title, not a new title assigned it by an abridger. Since the abridgment was taken from the large plates of Nephi it could have reasonably borne that name. This made more understandable Mormon's naming his own small book, the concluding one in his abridging work, "The Book of Mormon." (Confusing and somewhat redundant, some people have thought it, now that the present title to the volume states the same.) To Moroni, apparently, must then be given the credit not only for writing the title page, but for giving the name to the compilation as a whole. In this he showed great honor to his martyred father.

A third method noticed was Mormon's constant reference to the audience to whom he was truly writing the abridgment. He did not want the reader to lose sight of the fact that he had not addressed his book to his contemporaries--for they apparently never saw it--but to the house of Israel, the remnant of the Nephites and Lamanites

¹B. H. Roberts has commented on this in New Witnesses for God III (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951), 124-134.
particularly, and to the Gentiles throughout the world (Mormon 3: 17-22). His message to them was a testimony of Jesus Christ, the gospel, and the Bible; a call to repentance; and a warning of judgments.

Another crucial subject to be viewed in the context of his methods was the manner in which he structured his book, or the way in which he put together the parts of the abridgment. This impinged very heavily upon the issue of relevance of material for a given problem at hand. The Words of Mormon served as the focal point of that investigation, for it stood as the connecting link between the small plates of Nephi (a section of unabridged material, sandwiched in between the first and second sections of the abridged record), and the abridged material which followed.

The first aspect observed about the small plates and the manner in which Mormon handled them was that he apparently did not copy them onto his own plates, but instead put the actual, physical plates with the plates of Mormon, his abridgment plates. Since the language had changed among the Nephites over a 1000 year period, it appeared that Mormon was giving Joseph Smith, the future translator, a double challenge. Mormon's plates were in reformed Egyptian, whereas the small plates of Nephi were evidently in Egyptian of some earlier form (1 Nephi 1:2; Mormon 9:32).¹

Looking specifically at the Words of Mormon and the methods

used therein, it was observed that in verses 1 to 12 Mormon explained the insertion of the small plates of Nephi at that point. Following this, he picked up the thread of the story at nearly the same place he had presumably dropped it in the Book of Lehi, the first portion of Mormon's record which was translated by Joseph Smith, the manuscript of which has since been lost. ¹ Mormon had apparently dropped the thread of the story at the place in the Book of Lehi where he read that Amaleki handed King Benjamin the small plates (cf. Omni 24-25). Reading the account of that event was possibly the stimulus which caused Mormon to search among the library of records to find the very plates of which he had just read. The Lord inspired him in this, he reported later (Words of Mormon 3, 7). In all probability he already knew the existence of the plates before that time, for they had been prepared right from the beginning for the instruction of the Nephites, and were so used (1 Nephi 19:3; Alma 63:12).

After explaining the insertion of the plates, Mormon wrote three verses (12-14) to review the war (in more detail than Amaleki did in Omni 24) and then continued on to write the balance of the Words of Mormon (15-18). Those latter verses are the abridgment of what was evidently the last part of the plates containing the Book of Lehi. Apparently Mormon did not put those few verses with the bulk of the abridged Book of Lehi. Viewing matters this way helped explain the presence of historical material in what would otherwise be

¹The "Book of Lehi" was so named, and the story of its loss briefly explained, by Joseph Smith in the Preface to the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon.
an editorial. To suppose that verses 12 to 18 are merely a copy or synopsis of what was included as the last part of the Book of Lehi would be to accuse Mormon of a lengthy and unneeded duplication. Whereas the encountering of Amaleki's passing of the plates to King Benjamin would logically be the point at which Mormon would stop and search for those plates, it was logical to conclude that Mormon ended the Book of Lehi at approximately that point.

Although no mention was made by Mormon as to where he would place the small plates within the stack of plates known as the plates of Mormon, the present location of the books in the Book of Mormon suggested very strongly that the Book of Lehi preceded in position that which is now available. The contents of the Words of Mormon, linked as they are to the portions before and after, reinforced this conclusion (Words of Mormon 3-6). It was observed that the small plates would have been a somewhat unusual beginning for the abridgment as a whole, and an even worse ending.

Since the small plates of Nephi were then inserted, apparently right after the Book of Lehi, Mormon had need of writing the superscription to First Nephi as the transition editorial leading from the Book of Lehi (abridgment literature) to the small plates of

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1D&C 10:41 further seemed to verify this original positioning of the small plates and the Words of Mormon: "Therefore, you shall translate the engravings which are on the plates of Nephi, down even till you come to the reign of king Benjamin, or until you come to that which you have translated, which you have retained." (Underlining added.) The appositive clause which is underlined, and which refers back to "the reign of king Benjamin," evidently was stating that Joseph Smith had already translated some of the Book of Mosiah before receiving this revelation.
Nephi (first-person writing). 1

Regarding the Book of Mosiah, the next book following the Words of Mormon, Mormon evidently felt no need of a superscription, having already given adequate editorial detail in the Words of Mormon itself.

Still on the subject of Mormon's abridgment methods and relevance, there was another major aspect observed. This one likewise regarded the relationship of the Words of Mormon to that which preceded and followed it, but particularly with reference to the point in time at which the Words of Mormon was written in relation to the rest of the abridgment. In spite of the seeming implication in verse 1 that Mormon was just minutes away from delivering "... the record which I have been making ..." to his son, Moroni, a careful look at the evidence within the Words of Mormon led to a different conclusion.

In the first place, the time-frame for verse 1 was easily susceptible of being extended to include the entire period during which Mormon did his abridging work.

As one factor demonstrating this, the closing part of the Words of Mormon did not at all give the impression that these were the last words which he intended to write, the last effort after

1Evidences and a discussion of Mormon's authorship of the superscriptions appear below in the next major section.
having abridged the entire history of the Nephites. Further, Mormon referred to finding "these plates," the small plates of Nephi (vs. 3), when he had come to the reign of King Benjamin, and then continued his thought pattern in unbroken fashion through verse 5, stating that he was intending to continue on with the task of making his abridged record. This showed that Mormon was not finished with his large project.

Some scholars have raised the question, "Does not verse 5 imply that Mormon was merely going to finish the abridgment of the short historical portion of the Words of Mormon which makes up verses 10 to 18? An analysis of verses 5 and 6 revealed that this could not logically be the case. First, Mormon's use of "record" in verse 5, and then again in verse 6, seemed to refer repeatedly to the same thing. No change of topic was indicated, and "record" in verse 6 decidedly referred only to the total abridgment work. This led unmistakably to the conclusion that when he took "these plates" and "... put them with the remainder of [his] record ..." (vs. 6), he was referring to the small plates of Nephi being put with his yet-unfinished abridgment record--the same record he spoke of twice in verse 5 as the one he was going to finish.

1Dr. Sperry has implied it to be that way in his Compendium, p. 283. On p. 281 he also said, "... It is quite obvious that he means the entire record he had made as far as and including Mormon, Chapter 7..." (Referring to Words of Mormon verse 1.) This could not be, for Mormon wrote chapters 6 and 7 after the battle of Cumorah! Therefore, he knew that Moroni and a few others had survived the destruction of the people. Verse 1 of the Words of Mormon would not have been written with such wording after the battle of Cumorah.
Thus, the collective factors pointed to the thesis that finishing his record "upon" the small plates (vs. 5) meant that he would continue his abridgment of Mosiah, Alma, etc., "in addition to" or "added upon" the small plates which had been inserted at that point. (Webster's Third New International Dictionary defined "on" and "upon" as having, for one of their meanings, "in addition to.") In other words, Mormon intended to add the remainder of his abridgment stacked upon, or following, the small plates of Nephi. Therefore, the words "remainder of my record" in verse 5 did not refer merely to the Words of Mormon, but to the books of Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, Third Nephi, Fourth Nephi, and Mormon.

Whether Mormon wrote the Words of Mormon on a blank space left on the small plates of Nephi, which were full (Omni 30), or whether he wrote on a new plate which adjoined them when placed in his compilation--in either case, Mormon could have used the term "these" and be referring to something present or near, namely, the small plates. This consideration, therefore, did not negate the above conclusion.

A further noticeable writing method used by Mormon was his manner of stressing certain periods of history and the lessons to be derived from them. This editorial selectivity, a natural part of any editing work, resulted in a large emphasis upon the following three periods in the Nephite-Lamanite history: (1) the origin and founding of their civilizations--600 B.C. to c. 500 B.C.; 1 (2) the

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1 This period was covered in the Book of Lehi, the first portion of the Book of Mormon. As already mentioned, this was the material lost by Martin Harris (see D&C 3 and 10).
era of preparation for the coming of Christ--124 B.C. to 34 A.D.; and (3) the apostasy and fall of the Nephite civilization--c. 322 A.D. to 385 A.D.¹ The degree to which Mormon emphasized the various eras, expressed in a ratio of pages to years, may be seen in graphic form in Figure 1 on the next page.

Mormon's giving emphasis to those eras in that way seemed essentially to stress, as the fundamental theme in the Book of Mormon, the central idea of the acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ. This method was observed to be in harmony with the stated purposes for the Book of Mormon, as summarized in chapter one of this study.

Continuing on to an inspection of the writing methods used by Mormon, one item indicated that Mormon either forgot something, made a mistake, or was silent about reporting it. The passage in question was 3 Nephi 18:37, where Mormon promised that a latter part of the book would show that the record was true which said that the Lord gave the disciples power to give the Holy Ghost. Mormon did show later that the disciples actually used this power (3 Nephi 26:17), but he did not present the documentary evidence regarding the "record," as he had promised. Whether through proofreading, or through direct inspiration, Moroni apparently discovered that his father had not included something which he had intended to include. Moroni made up this deficiency in Moroni 2.

The preceding documentation effort was definitely not assigned by Mormon to his son, for Moroni himself indicated that he had not

¹See the Book of Mormon--(1) pp. 1-125; (2) pp. 134-452; (3) pp. 460-71.
*This does not include the Book of Ether

Figure 1. Mormon's Abridging Methods--Ratio of Pages to Years
supposed he would write anything beyond Ether (Moroni 1:1). In a second case, however, Mormon may have assigned his son to write something which he had promised in his record (Mosiah 28:19), but had not been able to do. This has reference to Moroni's accomplishment of abridging the Book of Ether. The transition from the end of Mormon 9 to Ether 1 was observed to be so smooth as to suggest that the writing of Ether fit under the general instructions to Moroni which Mormon had given his son (Mormon 8:1; cf. Moroni 9:24). This seemed even more plausible by adding the fact that Moroni, at every turn, was silent as to any specific causation or command, from either his father or the Lord, which had led him to abridge and include the Book of Ether.\footnote{Possibly the "sacred records" referred to in Moroni 9:24, which Mormon intended to deliver to Moroni, included the plates of Ether.}

Having considered the writing and teaching methods pertaining to Mormon's abridgment work, the investigation next led to a consideration of matters pertaining to the language ability exhibited by Mormon as a result of his abridgment task. Since all portions of his small Book of Mormon (pertaining to his lifetime) appeared only in abridgment form, the analysis of his language ability during his abridgment problem and assignment (number twelve) necessarily included a study of the language used from Mormon 1:1 to 5:24. (The remainder, from 6:1 to 7:10 was written after the battle of Cumorah and was studied in that later context. See problem seventeen, below.)

Mormon's language abilities, as reflected in Mormon 1:1 to 5:24, were perceived by this investigator as being basically direct
narrative, with doctrinal editorials and exhortations mixed in. The doctrinal parts appeared in abstract form, with small amounts of concrete imagery. The historical parts consisted of very practical descriptions, not condescending, however, to excessive details. The principal images noted, were "house-tops; blood; arms of Jesus; land; seed; dark; chaff; before the wind; shepherd; vessel without anchor or sail; earth as a scroll; and lion." He provided very objective descriptions of extremely horrible wars and public disorders, but his sensitive feelings and great sorrow were still strongly visible (Mormon 2:12-15, 18-19, 23-24). Throughout he maintained an editorial, universal, or omniscient view, causing some of the historical events to be mixed in with topical clarity, but not with certainty as to chronology (e.g., Mormon 2:17-18).

As has been noted by Burgon, Mormon's writings abounded in such rhetorical forms as synonymous parallelism, similes, rhetorical questions, and apostrophe.¹

The only reference to a former prophet, in the passages referring to the immediate problem under consideration (3:9-22; 4:1-22), was to Adam (3:20).

The topic of Mormon's success in dealing with this problem, and the people's response to him, was alluded to earlier. Though he doubtlessly sought to dissuade his people from turning toward aggressive warfare, they refused to listen and prepared to march. Mormon's

efforts there failed, at least in terms of wrestling a total repentance from his people. The Lord justified Mormon's efforts, however (3:15). The root-source of the failure was clearly explained earlier: "they did not dwindle in unbelief, but they did wilfully rebel against the gospel of Christ" (4 Nephi 38), speaking of the Lamanites, but applicable to all willful apostates. Looking further along in Mormon's life, Mormon's return to the army (apparently following the majority of his abridging efforts) was observed. In doing so he did not contravene the Lord's law, which related only to aggressive warfare, for the Nephites were then again on the defensive (5:1-3). In a sense, therefore, Mormon's efforts toward deterring aggressive warfare were carried on to success by the Lord, in His own manner.

Mormon's success in the assignment phase of this problem, that of writing an abridged record, was not observable until later in his account. Not until following the battle at Cumorah did he finish his record, writing Mormon 6 and 7 as his final words. He definitely was successful in finishing this assignment, with Moroni's help at the end. Since the response of people to his efforts was a matter pertaining to modern times--his audience being a modern one--the question of their response to his labors could not be studied within the scope of this dissertation. The question of the quality of his abridgment was likewise felt to be beyond the limits of this study.

Later effects noted were Moroni's comments that his father made the record (Mormon 8:1, 5); a plea for the readers not to condemn them for imperfections; and an allusion to the reformed Egyptian
characters in which the abridgment was written by them (9:31-34).
He added the significant comment that one purpose of their writing
efforts (not a purpose of the book itself) was to "rid our garments
of the blood of our brethren, who have dwindled in unbelief" (9:35).

13) Removing Records from Hill
Shim (Mormon 4:23)

Sometime following the year 375 A.D., Mormon felt the need
of removing the records from the hill Shim. This briefly-stated
problem revealed little personal information about Mormon's qualifi-
cations for coping with it. It did show that he had a lively concern
for the Lord's records. He had kept them faithfully for about forty
years. Apparently motivated by the Lord's command (cf. 6:6), and
seeing that the Lamanites "were about to overthrow the land," he
removed from the hill Shim all of the records which Ammaron had
placed there in 321 A.D. (One hundred years later, around 421 A.D.,
Moroni sealed in the abridged record and buried it.)

No further teaching methods, teachings, or other personal
qualifications were observed. His success was evidently complete,
for he could report later that he hid up the records in another hill,
the hill Cumorah (6:6).

No later, direct teachings or references regarding this inci-
dent were observed in the writings of Moroni.

14) Resuming Command of Army for
Final Campaign (Mormon 5:1-7)

As a true patriot and captain, Mormon preferred to go down
with his "ship"--the Nephite army--when they found themselves on the
defensive again and were nigh unto destruction. This problem which Mormon faced, that of electing to go back to his wicked people and assisting them against their enemies, was linked somewhat to his prior assignment of being a witness, manifesting to the world whatever happened to his people. By being with them in all things right to the end he was better able to record the end, right down to the very feelings of the people.

While analyzing his qualifications for solving the problem, it was observed that the manner in which the people re-accepted their former commander was truly remarkable. Although he was over sixty-five years of age, they received him with alacrity. This appeared to be a token of respect, not for his physical prowess—for soon thereafter he, himself, began to feel his age (6:6)—but for his prophetic calling and his wisdom, which they had earlier rejected. This tardy acknowledgement of his deeper qualifications was a pathetic thing to observe. The dominant quality in his heart—love (3:12)—reasserted itself, and Mormon desired to assist the people over whom he still presided as prophet, even though he knew it to be a lost cause (5:2). He had no hope, for he knew of the surety of God's judgments upon the most wicked people in the history of the house of Israel (4:12). He knew they would be totally destroyed for sinking so low as to adopt aggressive warfare (4:4-5).

A careful reading of the text showed that Mormon did not violate any command of the Lord in going back to his post. He had first refused to lead the army any more (particularly in aggression), and then the Lord's command had come (3:15-16). The command was, according to the record, related only to his serving as an "idle
witness," although it might possibly have included an injunction against waging aggressive war (which Mormon had already rejected). The only command which Mormon violated was the one which he had given to himself, when he had promised or made an oath (3:11, 16; 5:1) that he would not assist the Nephite army. Since the Nephites were on the defensive again, the Lord did not forbid his assistance. No specific revelations were mentioned with regard to this problem, or his qualifications to cope with it. Had the Lord commanded him not to serve in the army, the conclusion seemed logical that He would have given a revelation permitting him to return. There was silence on both ends of the issue, however.

The style of action exhibited by Mormon, even in his old age, was one of boldness. Although his people imbibed of this rejuvenating attitude (5:6), the Lamanite tide swept over them.

No references were made to earlier prophets, and no teachings were emphasized, either for his contemporaries or for later generations. Likewise, no later effects were seen in the writings of Moroni.

Mormon's successes in his new campaign, and the response of his people, were briefly stated. As mentioned, the people received him with jubilation, expecting great things, even deliverance from their afflictions (5:1). The success of the campaign was much less gratifying: despite some initial repulses of the Lamanites at the city of Jordan and some of their other strongholds (5:3-4), in the year 380 A.D. the Nephites were forced out of what were apparently their last major lines of defense and compelled to flee toward the vast openness of their now-unsecured north land (5:4-7).
(15) Hiding Nephite Records; Giving Abridgment to Moroni
(Mormon 5:8-24; 6:6)

The Lord announced the next problem to Mormon when He said that the records should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the Lamanites, for they would destroy them (6:6). The qualifications for dealing with the situation were thus based essentially upon Mormon's ability to hide the plates. Since he apparently knew that the Nephites were to be destroyed, and since he at any time might be killed, Mormon obviously had to trust to inspiration to know at which time and place he should hide the records.

The fact that Mormon retrieved all the records from Ammaron's hiding place in the hill Shim--a site probably chosen by inspiration and adequately prepared as a hiding place--was observed to be singular and interesting. Unless the security was not satisfactory (a remote possibility), Mormon's action in removing the plates must have resulted from his desire to have all of the plates with him and his people at the place of their final destruction, or from the Lord's intention to deposit the plates in a more desirable location. It was observed that the Jaredite civilization was annihilated at the hill Ramah--the same hill and battle field selected by Mormon (Mormon 6:2; Ether 15:11). Since Moroni in some manner knew that the two sites were identical, it seemed that Mormon might have known also, and that the choice of the same final battle ground was more than accidental, or dictated merely from the strategic value of the location.
as Mormon's words might seem to imply (Mormon 6:4). All of the foregoing factors led to the conviction that Mormon operated in this case under the inspiration of the Lord. Otherwise he might have buried the plates at any convenient place along the retreat route and thus be rid of the heavy burden.

Another consideration impinging upon Mormon's carrying the plates with him to Cumorah, was the question of the degree to which the abridgment process was completed. Some have suggested that he needed the plates for the task of abridging. That might have been the case, particularly with respect to the inclusion of the small plates of Nephi (Words of Mormon 3); but the fact that Mormon already had the large plates of Nephi with him (Mormon 1:4), to which collection the small plates of Nephi had been added by King Benjamin, suggested more logically that he did not need the

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1 The Book of Ether is an abridgment of the Jaredite records. Since Ether finished his record near the hill Ramah-Cumorah, the distinct possibility appeared that he might have buried his record, and perhaps the whole Jaredite library, in that hill. Thus, the Jaredite and Nephite records (and perhaps even those from Adam to Noah) may have been assembled in the large room in the hill Cumorah, to which Oliver Cowdery referred (Brigham Young, "Address," p. 38).

2 Words of Mormon 3, 10-11. Although Words of Mormon 3-4 seemed to bear the connotation that Mormon was surprised, or unknowledgeable about the existence of the small plates, a careful look at D&C 10:39 revealed that some passage in his Book of Lehi had referred to those very plates. Nephi appeared to be the likely candidate for the author of that passage, for the words "a more particular account" (referring to the small plates) uniquely paralleled his words as seen in 1 Nephi 6:3 and 2 Nephi 5:33. Thus, Mormon would have at least read of the existence of the plates very early in his abridging work.
"remainder" (1:4) of the voluminous Nephite records while he was doing the abridging work. As shown above, he had begun the abridgment process as early as 362 A.D., more than thirteen years before removing the total library from the hill Shim (4:23). Likewise shown earlier was the fact that his work was confined to abridging solely the large plates of Nephi (3 Nephi 5:8-11). All of these things being considered, although he had not finished his abridgment, or at least had not finished the last three chapters thereof, Mormon evidently carried the total library of plates with him toward Cumorah for purposes other than the abridgment work.

Further aspects of Mormon's personality, as revealed through the passages discussing this problem, included his sensitivity to the feelings of others. He did not "desire to harrow up the souls of men in casting before them such an awful scene of blood and carnage" (5:8). He was dutiful and objective in presenting the entire grim and ghastly scene in his full account on the large plates (2:18), for the truth must be told; but for the abridgment designed to convert men, he condensed the picture.

Beyond not wanting to give the modern reader too much sorrow (5:9), Mormon gave merely a small account in order to be obedient to the command of the Lord (5:9). The Lord's guidance of the abridgment process was observed in this, as well as in the commandment and revelation which informed Mormon that he was to hide up the record unto the Lord, and that in his own due time it would be brought forth unto the house of Israel and the Gentiles (5:12-15, 22). Mormon apparently also received revelation telling him that the battle at Cumorah would be the last one, and that he should hide up the plates,
not letting them fall into the hands of the Lamanites (6:6). As was noted in the treatment of problem twelve, above, this command- ment and revelation was apparently not the one commanding him to make the abridgment, for he had already received those instructions before. Rather, Mormon mentioned the making of his record as a summary statement, given at the time he had finished up to Mormon 5:24 and had assigned the custody of the abridgment to his son, Moroni.

To Mormon's credit was the fact that, having written a great book, he had the humility to recognize the will of the Lord and his son's call as a prophet—allowing him even the privilege of writing the last two chapters and then whatever else the Lord instructed him to add. The fortunate addition of Moroni 9 provided a look into Mormon's mind regarding this, and likewise made Moroni look justified for all the additions he made to someone else's book. Had all of that not been the will of the Lord, surely Mormon would have buried up the book as commanded.

At this point Mormon "began to be old" (6:6), so he hid all of the records in the hill Cumorah, except the plates of Mormon, which he gave to his son. Following the battle he evidently took the plates back from Moroni long enough to write Mormon 6 and 7, then returned them to Moroni (Mormon 6:1, 6).

Mormon's success in this problem and assignment was reportedly complete. No former prophets were quoted or referred to in this problem.

A later effect with reference to this problem-assignment was observed in Moroni's writings (Ether 15:11), where he stated that
the Jaredite hill Ramah was the same one in which Mormon had buried the plates. Still another later effect was directly stated in the writings of Moroni. He affirmed that his conclusion to the Book of Mormon (the small one of that name) was in fulfillment of the command of his father (Mormon 8:1). The command to which he referred appeared to be the one mentioned in Mormon's second epistle (Moroni 9:24), but which was probably reissued at the time of handing over the plates. When Moroni wrote chapters 8 and 9 at the end of his father's small book, he seemed to have few plates to write on (8:5), and definitely did not have in mind writing that which today is known as the Book of Moroni (Moroni 1:1). The fact that not until Moroni 1:1 did he state that he had not intended to write more, suggested that even the Book of Ether might possibly have been included within the command given him by his father. The smooth transition from Mormon to Ether, and no word of any command to write Ether made this seem a possibility. At any rate, Mormon evidently had some knowledge of the fact that the Book of Ether was to be passed on to modern times (Mosiah 28:19). On the other hand, the fact that Mormon left Moroni with a shortness of plates (8:5) brought in question whether the immediate command to Moroni had included the assignment to work on the Book of Ether. Moroni's formal ending, "Amen," at the end of Mormon 9:37, connoted that such was originally intended by father and son to be the end of the text of the Book of Mormon, with the Book of Ether attached later by Moroni as an
appendix.

(16) Gathering All Nephites, and Leading Battle at Cumorah
(Mormon 6:1-5, 7:15)

Gathering the Nephites to the land of Cumorah, and leading them into their final battle, were the next problems faced by Mormon. The two problems were considered together for the purposes of this study.

Following the rout of his people from their last major defense perimeter at Jordan and related cities (Mormon 5:3-7), Mormon successfully petitioned the king of the Lamanites to stage the consummating, decisive battle in the land of Cumorah. His ability to gain this request indicated that Mormon possessed not only tact, but a knowledge of the warfare traditions to which the king would respond.

The next phase of the problem was to gather in all of the Nephites to the battle encampment (6:4-5). Mormon's qualifications for succeeding in this enterprise were visible mainly in the statement, adduced earlier, that the Nephites looked to him as a deliverer (5:1). After resuming command of the army, Mormon had indeed succeeded in infusing new courage into them (5:6), and they had maintained their defenses for some time. Their final loss at Jordan and nearby cities apparently did not sour the Nephites on their aged commander,

¹Moroni did not make an end of his account at Mormon 8:13, taking a temporary break, any more than Mormon did at the end of Words of Mormon 9; 3 Nephi 5:19-20; or 3 Nephi 10:19. Such expressions appeared to be more a form of winding up a personal narrative and turning to the subject at hand. (For a different view, cf. Sperry, Compendium, p. 42.)
for he could report that by the beginning of the year 385 A.D., "we had gathered in all the remainder of our people unto the land fo Cumorah" (6:5). Mormon's abilities as a "gatherer" were also seen in his lengthy experience in carrying on that enterprise (2:7, 21; 3:5; 5:5).

With respect to his ability to cope with the major problem, the final battle, the account showed Mormon to be a strategist. He had chosen the Cumorah battle field for tactical reasons (and apparently other reasons, as discussed earlier), in the hope of gaining advantage over the Lamanites (6:4). His untiring love for his people and his unconquerable spirit manifested themselves in that action, but in spite of such a positive attitude he evidently still knew that it was the last struggle of his people (6:6).

Although "every heart" was filled with fear and terror (6:7-8) as the great Lamanite army swept toward them, this description could not have applied to Mormon and Moroni (and perhaps a few others), for such fears were only in the hearts of the wicked, Mormon said (6:7). He had courage and was not afraid to die, having made his calling and election sure (2:19). Despite having already felt bowed down with age, (6:6), Mormon led his people into battle; a man of seventy-four at the head of a division of 10,000 soldiers, the combined army totalling 230,000 soldiers (perhaps excluding women and children)! (6:10-15.)

No teachings, teaching methods, or references to former prophets were discovered in the text of this problem. The only later effect directly referred to in the writings of Moroni was the death
of his father (8:2-3, 5).

As to the success of Mormon, the commanding general of the twenty-three commanders of 10,000, Mormon and Moroni were miraculously the only ones spared. Twenty-two others also survived, plus some who had escaped toward the south countries and some who had dissented to the Lamanites (6:11-15). Having been wounded, Mormon's being spared was indeed miraculous (6:10). The Nephite nation had been destroyed, but the last two historians lived on.

(17) Writing Epilogue to Battle; Leaving Final Message (Mormon 6:1 to 7:10)

Borrowing back the plates from Moroni, Mormon proceeded to meet the final challenge of his ministry, at least as far as the record showed. This was to write a descriptive account of the final battle, and then leave a final message for future generations.

To write a human report of the battle would have been easy for him or for any other person on the scene. The test of his qualifications was this question: did he write as a prophet of God would write? His character and personality traits became apparent in the way he dealt very factually with the battle account, giving a clear, objective description. Though a general from age fifteen to seventy-four, among hardened people, he was still sensitive to the feelings of his people, reporting their fears and terror (6:7-8). As mentioned in an earlier problem, he was not permitted to give a lengthy description of the horrible scene by reason of the Lord's command (5:9), because the book was intended to convert men, and that the reader might not have too great a sorrow (5:9).
The deeper, spiritual feelings of the prophet were apparent as he mourned the loss of his people, expressing the true causes of their fall and the true reasons why he was sad. He had ministered to a dying nation, but in vain. His excess of spiritual emotion poured forth in a lamentation-type poem (6:17-22), described as such by Dr. Sperry.  

His was not a spirit of anger, but of deep mourning for their rejection of Jesus, which he stated to be the root of their problem (6:17). This was a summation of all the other causes attributed to the fall of the Nephites, as listed by Mormon throughout the book: secret combinations (Helaman 2:13-14); willfulness of their hearts in seeking blood and revenge (Mormon 4:4; Moroni 9:23); pride (Moroni 8:27); loss of the Holy Ghost (Moroni 8:27-29; 9:3-4, 22); rejecting so much knowledge (Moroni 8:29); not repenting (Moroni 9:3); and their loss of love, continually being angry (Moroni 9:3-5). In this manner Mormon wrote the coroner's report on the spiritual causes in the unnatural death of the Nephite civilization. The coroner's jury is the modern reader.

No specific revelation was mentioned in connection with this assignment. Having been shown or told of the future things to come (3:16, 20), however, Mormon was led to speak very authoritatively to his future reading audience (7:1-10), exhorting them to righteousness.

Mormon's teachings methods in this instance bore a unique resemblance to the certainty and declarativeness of the Savior's style of speaking (3 Nephi 27:27). As mentioned above, his lamentation

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1 Sperry, Compendium, pp. 442, 452-53.
poem was effective in expressing his inner, spiritual feelings. The historical portion was a simple narrative consisting of practical descriptions.

The language abilities observed in this section of Mormon's writings (the portion of the abridged record written after the battle) were similar to the first section of his small book (the portion from Mormon 1:1 to 5:24). The doctrinal portions were expressed in abstractions, with little symbolism. The historical narrative was in practical language. The few verbal images called to mind were the following: a description of the land of Cumorah (6:4); a description of fallen soldiers—"flesh; bones; and blood lying on the earth to molder"; also, "choirs; water; fire; weapons; and judgment seat."

One reference to a former prophet was observed, but that by name only: Jacob (Israel) (7:10). The only later effect was Moroni's comment in Mormon 8:5 regarding his father's statement of the purpose of the record. This could have had reference to a passage from this problem (7:9), as well as other passages (3:20-22; 5:14-15).

Mormon was evidently completely successful, before his death, in writing that which he had in his heart to write. The later comment by Moroni that his father had been killed by the Lamanites was an indirect reference back to the preceding problem, the battle, and served as a conclusion and epitaph to this problem (8:3). According to the record, Mormon and Abinadi were the only Nephite prophets who died at the hands of their enemies, sealing their testimony with their blood (Mosiah 17:20; Mormon 8:3). Apparently Mormon died from his battle wounds (8:5). Although the plates were buried at Cumorah,
the site of two national suicides, a martyred prophet's innocent
blood hallowed the ground of the record burial place.

MORMON'S MINISTRY TO MODERN TIMES

The teachings which Mormon included in his total abridgment
work were directed specifically to modern man, as shown in earlier
portions of this chapter. Inasmuch as these teachings were designed
to solve today's problems (the analysis of which goes beyond this
study), no conclusions will be drawn as to their relevance, or the
effect of Mormon's personality and teachings upon the modern Book
of Mormon audience.

At this point it will suffice to explain the methods or
basis upon which the various passages throughout the Book of Mormon
were judged to be solely from the hand of Mormon, rather than from
the earlier prophets being described in the book. These passages
fell into two categories: editorials and abridging details, and
book headings and section superscriptions.

Editorials and Abridging
Details

A primary consideration for identifying passages as "editor-
ials" or "abridging details" which had been written by Mormon, was
the presence of personal pronouns and related terms, such as the
following: I, me, my, mine, we, our, ours, us; thus we see, I could
see, thus I saw, etc. Had these appeared in the original words of
the prophets whose works Mormon was abridging, he would have removed
them as he transposed the concepts into his own phraseology, or he
would have quoted the entire concept as the direct words of the prophet. This would be logical editorial policy. Examination of the text throughout the Book of Mormon revealed that Mormon, as abridger and editor, followed this procedure.

Another fundamental aspect of identifying the author of the passages arose out of the question, "Whose book is it?" Obviously, the book was written by Mormon. Thus, whatever was said in the book was his wording, unless otherwise indicated as the words of someone else. The subject matter was taken from the plates of Nephi, and presumably many of the words, since the Book of Mormon is an abridgment and not simply a history text written from multiple sources. Therefore, in the historical portions the impression was often gathered that Mormon himself was doing the writing, but in such cases if he was speaking strictly of the events as they happened, in chronicle form, the passages were not credited to him as uniquely his.

The method used for searching out the passages of Mormon's authorship, was a careful use of Reynolds' Concordance, looking up each individual passage listed under the categories "I, we," etc., as listed above. Secondly, a search was made page by page through the entire Book of Mormon to pick up any passages which had been missed—for example, statements such as Mosiah 6:6, an evaluation and compliment of King Mosiah. Mosiah himself would not have said such a thing; Mormon was the only other candidate. Another similar category of passages could be illustrated by Helaman 4:11-13. Preceding that was an historical portion; the passage itself was an editorial evaluation of the situation; and the very next verse (vs. 14) spoke of Nephi in
an objective or third person manner, telling of the things he did. Although Nephi was the historian of that period, he would not have spoken of himself in such a manner in a directly quoted passage.

A few other examples will serve to illustrate that the choices were carefully selected on the basis of specific standards. In cases where the writer was summarizing events of the future, careful examination revealed that it would have been illogical for the original historian to write in such a manner; thus, Mormon must have written the passage, as in the case of Alma 46:38, or Alma 48:20, 22, or even Helaman 14:1. Certain cases showed that Mormon gave a one-verse summary or conclusion to a book, at a point where the original author had not been speaking or writing for many verses (cf. Alma 63:17). Other cases, following a Mormon "we" editorial such as Alma 24:30, proceeded through passages of historical narrative with neither Mormon's hand visible nor the hand of an earlier author, and then immediately turned to further editorializing, as in Alma 25:9-12—a clear link back to Alma 24:30 being observable.¹ The subsequent verses reverted right back to historical narrative.

Two other interesting and unusual examples are worth mentioning. Mosiah 18:30, coming in the midst of a third-person

¹"And behold they are hunted at this day by the Lamanites" (Alma, 25:9) gave the initial impression that Mormon could not have written the passage, although all other indications said he had, for in his day the Lamanites would not have been hunting the seed of Amulon. All such would have either been killed or converted at the time of Christ, if they even lasted that long. The answer came when it was observed that "this day" was logically and grammatically correct for Mormon to say when referring to the day or time in which those events had occurred, namely the time period of Alma 25.
narrative regarding Alma and his people, was clearly seen to have been written by Mormon. This was especially evident from the deep emotional and spiritual fervor with which he eulogized the waters of Mormon, the forest of Mormon, and the place of Mormon—the source of his own name. The other case was Alma 11:1-20, in which Mormon evaluated the wicked collusion of judges and lawyers—interrupting the thread of the story to insert a lengthy explanation of the monetary system of the Nephites. This would have been highly unusual for Alma to do, but for an abridger who was passing his record on to a future generation not familiar with the Nephite system, it was logical.¹

One final case was the most difficult to decide upon: Alma 28:7-14. Although the passage contained two "and thus we see" clauses, it seemingly moved on into chapter 29 without identifying any change of author—and suddenly the end of Alma 29 was unmistakably from the hand of Alma! Several clues led to the conviction, however, that Mormon was indeed the writer in chapter 28, and that he had smoothly inserted a psalm-like statement from Alma with only a slight transitional introduction. First, from Alma 27:19-20 onward, the historical portion was clearly from Mormon. Likewise, following Alma's expressions in chapter 29 the historical matter in chapter 30 was again demonstrably from Mormon. The summarizing technique in Alma 28:7, the use of the word "endeth" in that verse, and the usage of "this account" in 28:8, 9, were all compared thoroughly to other

¹Ludlow, Companion, p. 88, also attributed this to Mormon.
similar passages throughout the entire Book of Mormon and were found to be remarkably Mormon's style, but not Alma's. The same held true for the manner of speaking of "Ammon and his brethren" (28:8) and the use of "and thus we see" (28:13, 14).

Further evidence for Mormon's authorship of this passage were seen in the resemblance of the superscription to Alma 17 (which served to introduce chapters 17 through 26, to which chapters 27 and 28 bore a very close topical relationship), and the summary statement in Alma 28:8. (See below for evidences showing the superscription to be Mormon's). The prayer for blessings on the sons of Mosiah (28:8) appeared to be Mormon's, for Alma's sentiments on the same subject (29:17) were worded differently. For one man to say the same thing twice within such a short space would have been obviously redundant.

Another apparent difficulty in resolving the case was the abundant use of present-perfect verbs in 28:9-13. A look at one such example, "we see" (28:13, 14), showed it to be a typical "historical present" usage by Mormon throughout the volume. A close examination of the other verbs revealed that they, too, could logically and grammatically be considered historical present terms in the hand of Mormon. In no observed cases did Alma use such an editorial "we." Mormon's employment of such phraseology, implying that he felt present, became very understandable when examining the context of the terrible battle which had been fought, and the marvelous defense by the Nephites of their converted Ammonite brethren in the land of Jershon. He evidently felt great sympathy for such an
A concluding evidence lay in the final verse to chapter 28.

"And thus we see the great call of diligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord . . ." served to tie in the past chapter with the subject of "missionary work" in chapter 29. Apparently Mormon felt that such an introduction was adequate, and that the reader would readily discern that the next chapter was by Alma. It obviously could not have been by Mormon, for he had never had such missionary successes as mentioned in 29:13-14.

The extensive evidences regarding this one case, the most difficult major one encountered, were presented merely to indicate the depth of consistency which was found in the entire editorial work of Mormon. Another passage illustrated this fact perhaps even more precisely. The first mention of Mormon by name following the Words of Mormon was found in his editorial in 3 Nephi 5:6-26. At first examination there seemed to be no particular reason why he had injected an editorial at that point, even taking occasion to describe his ministry and abridgment work. Perhaps he just felt like doing it that day, seemed to be the only answer. A comparison with the chapters immediately surrounding the passage, however, suddenly made apparent the fact that he had just finished narrating the account of the last war among the Nephites and Lamanites (A.D. 21-22) for 300 years—until the war which broke out the very year he had moved to Zarahemla (Mormon 1:8). As a human being with deep feelings, and a general with tragic experiences behind him, he truly could not resist projecting his own
inner thoughts at that point. The consistency of the man throughout his work was thus seen to be strongly evident.

Beyond those editorials cited in Appendix E, many more might have been from Mormon, but no sure proofs were visible. The same was true of the "abridging details," a separate section in Appendix E. These were passages prominently bearing Mormon's editorial stamp of identity. In that category could be listed a good share of the book; but such things as "he said," "and these are the words of . . .," "thus ended the forty-fifth year," or the descriptions of the activities of the record keepers, were not included.

A final issue on the subject of Mormon's editorial methods lay in the area of selected emphasis of doctrines. His assignment to teach his people, and his assignment to teach modern people, resulted in his selecting teachings to suit each audience, or the problem he was working to solve. This was nowhere more apparent than in his quotations selected from earlier prophets. On three occasions, for example, he quoted Lehi (Alma 50:19-20), Nephi (Alma 3:14-17, 19), and Mosiah (Alma 19:23). In all three cases his quotations differed, significantly enough to be noticeable, from the original statement as presented earlier in the Book of Mormon. (The first two from the small plates, the third from the abridgment of the large plates.) The discrepancy was readily understandable when viewed from the position that Mormon evidently had not copied either from the small plates or from his earlier abridgment work, but had copied from the large plates themselves. Nephi, on the small plates, had been selective himself. Mormon, in quoting from
the large plates evidently freely chose the passages and words which he felt needed emphasis. This was particularly seen in the passage from Mosiah, where in the second version (Alma 19:23) he added another complete sentence to the original statement (Mosiah 28:7) in order to emphasize the fulfillment of that promise.

By way of explanation, the sequence of numbering the teachings listed in Appendix E proceeded chronologically in relation to Mormon's life. Therefore, all of the teachings directed to his own people before he began the abridgment were listed first (problems 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10). These included, of course, his sermon and two letters. As mentioned earlier, after beginning his abridgment work Mormon did not report any further teachings to his own people. The second portion of the numbering sequence therefore included his editorial comments from the Words of Mormon through Fourth Nephi, followed by those teachings in Mormon 1 to 7 which were directed uniquely to modern men.

Book Headings and Section Superscriptions

The second main category of the writings of Mormon which were aimed toward modern readers, included the headings to the books within his abridgment, and the superscriptions to sections or chapters within those books. The latter were groups of chapters, or perhaps just one chapter, abridged or directly quoted from the plates of Nephi, all pertaining to some major epic in Nephite history.

In deciding the authorship of these headings and superscriptions,
the most important principle which had to be kept in mind was that
the entire Book of Mormon was made by Mormon, a compilation and
abridgment put together by him. (Moroni's later help was remembered
likewise.) With this perspective, the perception came immediately
that Mormon had written all of the superscriptions save one, as a
means of explanation and transition from one part to another. Moroni
apparently wrote the superscription to his father's letter (Moroni 9).

In order to clearly establish that the heading to First Nephi
had been written by Mormon, some further foundations had to be laid.
The evidences in problem twelve, above, regarding the order in
which the plates were arranged in the volume, were the result of the
research needed to lay those foundation stones. Analysis demonstrated
that the small plates of Nephi followed the plates containing the Book
of Lehi. The conclusion which logically followed was that Mormon had
need of writing a transitional bridge from the Book of Lehi to the small
plates. He evidently wrote the heading to First Nephi to serve that
purpose. This heading, and the other headings and superscriptions,
were thus very relevant pertaining to the problems at hand.

Further evidences for Mormon's authorship of the heading
to First Nephi were seen in such facts as the resemblance of this
heading, introducing a first-person account in the midst of an
abridged work, to the later first-person accounts inserted through-
out the abridgment and introduced by a superscription unmistakably
from Mormon (e.g., Mosiah 9, where Zeniff as the writer did not live
long enough to know all of the events mentioned in the superscription).
The language of the heading to First Nephi was objective, not the
type of personal language a person would seemingly use to recapitulate
the events of his own life. The closing words, "... or in other
words, I, Nephi, wrote this record," were seen to be an editorial
device for aiding the reader to obtain the true perspective: i.e.,
a first-person account would follow, whereas up to that point every-
thing had been third-person terminology. If Nephi had written it,
he could have simply said, "This is according to my account," omit-
ting the other words.

If the headings to First and Second Nephi were summaries
of the books they introduced, they would have to be considered
very inadequate. In reality they were not intended as summaries,
but as transitions and introductions pointing out the main topics
or terminal events, such as the arrival at the promised land (First
Nephi), and the death of Lehi, followed by the wanderings of the
Nephites in the wilderness (Second Nephi).

A careful stylistic analysis of the heading to First Nephi
revealed it to be compatible with Mormon's style in passages definitely
attributable to him. Although the prevalence of words such as "taketh"
and "confoundeth," with their "eth" endings seemingly differed from
the style in the headings to other books, such as Alma and Helaman,
this was only due to a difference in subject matter—i.e., reference
to one person by using the second person verb form (Nephi), as com-
pared to reference to more than one person by using the third person
verb form (Helaman and his sons, for example). Mormon used both forms

1Dr. Sperry assumed they were summaries, by Nephi, and was there-
fore forced to conclude that they were inadequate. *Compendium*, p. 144.
in his own small Book of Mormon.

Reflecting upon the headings in general, certain other criteria served to show that Mormon was their author. The third-person editorial perspective was visible, particularly in references to the original authors involved.\(^1\) Rather significant was the fact that the small Book of Mormon and the Book of Moroni, which were not abridgments or copies from another writer's works, contained no headings or superscriptions. This supported the conclusion regarding the editorial nature of such introductions. The miniature books (Enos, Jarom, and Omni) evidently needed no introduction. They were the only other books without one, for the Words of Mormon was written to be an introduction itself.

A thorough examination of chapter superscriptions in the books from the small plates showed that they were included in the first verse of a chapter (e.g., 2 Nephi 6:1; Jacob 2:1).\(^2\) That is to say, the writers on the small plates worked right into the text their introductions to large quotations from themselves or others. On the other hand, section and chapter superscriptions in the books from Mosiah onward stood apart from the text, being above the first verse in the case of chapter headings, or above the chapter number in the instance of section headings. This pattern was so observably consistent as to further verify the presence of Mormon's unifying, editorial hand.

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\(^1\) Cf. 1 Nephi 1; Jacob 1; Alma 5, 7, 9, 17, 36, 38, 39, 45; 4 Nephi.

\(^2\) Note: superscriptions were on the plates. The italicized chapters synopses are a modern addition.
SUMMARY

Summarizing the findings of this chapter, with the minor hypotheses in view,1 Mormon's ministry consisted of two parts, divided into seventeen problems. His first ministry was to his own contemporaries; the second, to modern times via the vehicle of his abridgment.

His qualifications for solving the problems confronting him were found to be adequate in all cases. His character was bold, yet humble; gentle and yet unflinching in courage and determination. In doctrinal teachings he had great knowledge and wisdom, yet the Nephites rejected his message repeatedly and ultimately. He was filled with joy only rarely by his experiences with his people, but had an abiding faith and the unsurpassable joy of knowing he would gain eternal life. He had joy in his son, Moroni, and in the many revelations given to both of them. His sorrow was great as the Nephites rejected the gospel, and as he saw their wickedness and their destruction. As a general he was found to be great, although the record was scanty in details. These experiences did not harden his heart, for even in the recounting of former wars among the Nephites he was moved to expressions of pathos. His background of military experience accumulated to the point that he was able to achieve great victories or hold fortifications against huge odds and with a weak and degenerate army. Even that could not stave off the certain destruction, however. Above all, he loved the Lord, he loved good, and he loved

1See Table 1 in chapter 1.
his people.

The revelations which he received were numerous, beginning with a personal visit from the Lord Jesus Christ. On other occasions he heard the voice of the Lord, or the Holy Ghost brought the word of the Lord.

Teachings methods used by Mormon as related to the people of his own time were very clearly discernible, but few examples were evident. The sermon in the synagoge contained doctrinal expositions as well as exhortation. On the brief occasions of preaching he emphasized the basic, or first principles of the gospel. In his first letter to Moroni he taught against a doctrine—infant baptism. The general mood or tone of his writings, letters, and preachings was predominantly filled with grave concern or sorrow, and yet always shored up by an indomitable spirit of love and faith. One very unusual aspect of his teaching methods was the "spiral or helical" form of developing concepts, progressively intertwining them. He spoke with great authority at times, and yet was not overbearing.

In language ability Mormon devoted most of his writings to practical, historical type narrative. When expounding doctrines he dealt largely in abstractions, but did mix in a moderate number of concrete images. His language was devoid of extensive symbolism, however, and was basically simple and logical.

Only a few references were made to former prophets.

On the subject of the relevancy of his teachings, evidence showed that for all problems pertaining to his ministry among his own people his teachings were directed to the problem; in other
words, they were definitely pertinent and relevant. This conclusion was qualified to the degree that for some of the situations the exact problem, or its full extent, was not divulged by the record. This was particularly true in the sermon preached at the synagogue. As explained above, no conclusions could be drawn regarding the relevance of the teachings to the problems in the case of those teachings directed solely to modern readers, and thus to their problems. Appendix E lists the teachings.

Mormon's successes appeared in a dim light only when the destruction of the Nephites was viewed as his problem or his fault. In reality such was not the case. His success in fulfilling all of his assignments was great, even by comparison with other prophets who succeeded in leading their people toward righteousness. The unflattering nature of his character appeared to be one of the fundamental reasons why the Lord placed him in such a spiritual quagmire. In this he might be compared with Noah, one of the greatest prophets of all time, or with Ether, or Nephi the son of Helaman. He was successful on the battle field, for in three major wars he caused the Nephites (with the Lord's help) to be victorious, even when in two of those wars his army had been constantly losing and retreating. He succeeded in rearing a great prophet-son. Perhaps most significantly for this present time, he accomplished the abridging of 1,000 years of Nephite-Lamanite history, couching it in a volume perhaps unexcelled in total greatness by any book in the course of the world's history. In doing this Mormon provided an editorial insight into not only the problems of his own time, but, through the gift of
prophecy, into the problems of modern man. Thus, in terms of unity and editorial perspective—eternal, religious perspective—the Book of Mormon stands without peer even among the standard works of the Church.

In the area of later effects upon his own people, 'Mormon had little opportunity to excel, for only his son and a few others survived him. As a measure of the total effectiveness of a prophet this category is important, however, and even here Mormon's influence was not lacking in the record kept by Moroni. Several specific references were found to his father and the commandments he had given to his son.

An analysis of Mormon's teachings in the light of the major purposes for the Book of Mormon was especially crucial in order to evaluate his effectiveness and relevance, for he was the one who authored the majority of them. Other prophets earlier had expressed many of the same concepts, but he pulled them together into three statements (Mormon 3:17-22; 5:12-15; 7:8-9). Close examination of the tabulation on the next page (Table 4) showed that Mormon's teachings touched on every major purpose, and repeatedly on some of them. The passages of a doctrinal nature touched on a broader range of purposes than did those brief ones with historical content. Of those problems touching on the most purposes, nearly an equal number were from the ministry to his times and from his ministry to modern times.

In conclusion, the evidence revealed clearly that Mormon was effective in fulfilling his roles and assignments. The responses of
the people were largely very poor due to their own wickedness. His teachings were found to be relevant to the problems confronting him and his people. The next chapter analyzes these findings in the light of the two major hypotheses, comparing the evidence with that found regarding the other three prophets under consideration.
### Table 6

Mormon--Data Summary on Minor Hypotheses

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Recording observations on plates</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>he obeyed, wrote record</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 5 6 9 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Preaching to his people</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>people rebelled; Lord forbade more preaching</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 4 6 8 9 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teaching saints in synagogue</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>no record</td>
<td>Moroni quoted entire sermon in Moroni 7</td>
<td>1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leading Nephite armies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>defeat at first, then victory</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 9 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Feeling joy, sorrow over his people</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>his joy was in vain; his sorrow returned</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 4 9 11 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Leading second military campaign</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>retreat, then victory; lands regained</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 9 (few)</td>
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Table 6 (continued)

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<tr>
<td>7. Writing an epistle against infant baptism</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>no record</td>
<td>Moroni quoted entire epistle in Moroni 8</td>
<td>1 3456789 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Writing an epistle to report war; encouraging Moroni</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Moroni remained faithful, wrote as requested</td>
<td>Moroni quoted entire epistle in Moroni 9; also, Mormon 8:1</td>
<td>12 4 9 11 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Preparing Nephites for future war</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>preparations led to winning next war</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Preaching last cry to repentance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>preaching was in vain; people hardened hearts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 3 56 89 (many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Leading third military campaign</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>won two battles, and thus the war</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (few)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Leaving army to abridge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>Mormon left army; they turned aggressive; he wrote abridgment, finishing it after battle of Cumorah</td>
<td>Mormon 8:1, 5; 9:31-34</td>
<td>123456 89 11 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nephite history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Removing records from Hill Shim</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>he removed records to safety</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Resuming command of army for final campaign</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>was given command; they held cities for short time, then retreated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 9 11 (few)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Hiding Nephite records; giving abridgment to Moroni</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>Mormon hid the records, gave abridgment to son</td>
<td>Ether 15:11; Mormon 8:1</td>
<td>1234 6 91011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Gathering all Nephites, and leading battle at Cumorah</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>gathered all who were willing; led in battle, was wounded; Nephites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Problems-goals</th>
<th>B. Were beneficial qualifications exhibited?</th>
<th>C. Were relevant teachings emphasized?</th>
<th>D. Successes-responses</th>
<th>E. Later effects directly cited</th>
<th>F. Purposes fulfilled (^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing epilogue to battle; leaving final message</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(for modern times only)</td>
<td>finished his record, returned it to Moroni</td>
<td>Mormon 8:5</td>
<td>12345 891011 (very many)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) See Appendix B for list of teachings, with references.

\(^b\) For list of major purposes, see p. 20.
PART THREE

CONCLUSIONS
Chapter 7

EVALUATION AND SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE REGARDING THE TWO MAJOR HYPOTHESES

This study has considered the lives, personalities, problems, and teachings of four Book of Mormon prophets; the tools of analysis have been six minor hypotheses. Inasmuch as the purposes of the study were to answer two major hypotheses, it is necessary at this point to synthesize the evidence which was gathered by means of the said tools, evaluating these findings in relation to the major questions. That which is concluded regarding these four representative prophets will hopefully, as a consequence, be useful for further studies of other prophets, both in and out of the Book of Mormon.

MAJOR HYPOTHESIS I

As stated in the initial chapter, the first major hypothesis pertained to the personality of a prophet: "Did the unique personality of each representative Book of Mormon prophet cause him to be significantly qualified and effective in coping with the problems of the office in which the Lord placed him?" By listing and analyzing each prophet's problems in relation to his qualifications, successes, the responses of his people, later effects upon Book of Mormon peoples, and his contributions toward fulfilling the major purposes of the Book of Mormon, it was possible to provide specific data to
answer this general question.

As a preface to the evaluation of their personalities, it must be said that the four prophets studied were not perfect, nor did they pretend to be. Although the Book of Mormon was sparing in yielding up details regarding their weaknesses, it was explicit about those weaknesses. More evidence was available regarding the total, balanced picture of their lives—personality and teachings—than about most of the other prophets in the Book of Mormon. As a result, the findings were rather clear-cut.

Of the particular prophets chosen as representatives of their eras, all were prophets or seers, fathers, Church historians, and civil leaders. All but Lehi were military commanders. The evidence assembled in relation to their effectiveness in these roles showed that they were well qualified and successful. One partial exception to this was noted in one problem in Lehi's life. Lehi murmured temporarily at one point, but rallied to finish his ministry with diligence and wisdom. Some problems were only briefly described in the Book of Mormon, but sufficient evidence existed to draw the conclusion that the prophets were successful in coping with those problems. When they made mistakes, through the help of the Lord they succeeded in rectifying them. Since the Book of Mormon was designed to edify, these mistakes were mentioned but the degrading details were not provided as they would not have a salutary effect. The Lord was evidently well pleased with their efforts, even though the people's responses were poor in times of wickedness.

Each prophet had a personality peculiar to himself, and each
one used his own unique talents and abilities to fulfill the assignment of the Lord. Although it is not given to mortal man to know what qualities existed in a person before this life, and why the Lord chose an individual as a prophet, nonetheless it was possible to determine from the Book of Mormon that each of the four prophets exhibited characteristics which were very successful in coping with his current problems. Perhaps others could have done the same things they did, but being in a given place at a given time, and with authority from God, they were uniquely qualified to function, particularly in view of the fact that in addition they had some special characteristics and abilities which further enabled them to be successful. Lehi, for example, was evidently called to lead his expedition because he was of the lineage of Joseph of Egypt, and was righteous; but in addition to that he apparently had certain skills, language abilities, and practical experiences which made his course successful. His wisdom, garnered through "an opposition in all things," gave him understanding for the task of working with his recalcitrant sons. His constant reaching upward served as an example for Nephi and the others. Nephi, on his part, had need of his faith in the Lord in order to accomplish the many feats and challenges laid before him. His practicality was balanced by the great spirituality which enabled him to lay the foundation for a nation of spiritual giants. In Alma's case, his experience with the buffetings of hell enabled him not only to understand and succor Corianton, but to labor unceasingly with his people when they quickly turned to wickedness. Finally, Mormon was observed to have wisdom,
learning, and purity of love—all befitting his role as editor of the Nephite record and his challenge in laboring diligently with a people bent on self-destruction. He was dutiful despite the chaos around him. Each of the four had numerous physical challenges to confront, but the spiritual ministry seemed to become more successful as a result.

The language style which was evident in the passages considered, indicated certain unique features about the prophets. Lehi's style was seemingly more complex than the others. Alma apparently used more visual images. Nephi and Mormon, in certain passages, used a helical spiral method of stating and reviewing concepts.

Of great interest to this investigator was the fact that no negative or derogatory later effects were noted. On the other hand, many direct references indicated that later prophets felt Lehi, Nephi, Alma, and Mormon had been effective, and that their teachings had been relevant.

One aspect of each prophet's role was his responsibility to contribute, through his writings, something toward the purposes for which the Book of Mormon was written. This was an assignment imposed upon them by Mormon as he chose accounts of their lives and teachings to include in his book. In a sense, it was solely Mormon's responsibility to see to it that the contents of his book met his purposes; but since he was limited in part to what the Nephite annals contributed, the responsibility must be shared by the other prophets. This was especially true for Nephi and Alma, some of whose writings were directed solely to later generations. With those considerations
as a preface, the conclusion drawn from the evidence was that each of the four prophets contributed toward fulfilling each of the major purposes, as listed in chapter one. Their doctrinal teachings, particularly, touched repeatedly on many of the purposes.

In a word, the answer to the first major hypothesis was an unequivocal "yes." This researcher was able to observe, through systematic analysis of the minute details of the Book Mormon, that each of the four prophets had a unique personality which significantly qualified him to be effective in coping with his roles, assignments, problems, and goals.

MAJOR HYPOTHESIS II

The second major hypothesis of this study concerned the teachings of the prophets: "Were the teachings of each representative Book of Mormon prophet directly relevant to his problems, assisting him to be effective in fulfilling his assignment and meeting his goals?" The criteria for relevance was stated to be "whether or not a given teaching touches directly upon the perceived problem at hand." In other words, did the prophets teach doctrines which met both the eternal and the current needs of the people. The emphasized teachings which each prophet addressed to his own contemporaries served as the material for analysis. They are all listed in Appendixes B, C, D, and E.

The conclusion reached, after looking carefully at each problem and each individual emphasized teaching, was that all four prophets directed their teachings to the problems at hand. In some problems
the evidence regarding relevance was meager, but it still supported this conclusion. The prophets not only taught the principles of the eternal gospel, but they reasoned, expounded, preached, and taught those principles in terms of the immediate problems facing their audiences. They used examples, illustrations, and reasoning which applied the principles in a current setting. Nephi's answers to his brothers were filled with scriptural references, ones which his brothers knew, but Nephi adapted them to themselves as a branch of Israel. Lehi's teachings, though complex above any of the other three, were filled with imagery which was familiar to his audience. The difficulty which Laman and Lemuel had in understanding it was not because the images were strange, but because they failed to see the spiritual depth to them. Both Lehi and Nephi had a verbal ability which rose to the heights of beauty and power when confronting their adversaries with the most sublime teachings at their command. On those occasions the teachings were remarkably relevant. Alma frequently reasoned logically from the scriptures. In addition, he used many personal examples from his own life, the life of his father, or some other prophet. These teachings were also notably relevant. Finally, Mormon had a gift for writing which was demonstrated particularly in letters to his son, or in the editorials addressed to modern times. His wisdom was reflected in those passages, for they concisely analyzed specific problems and gave pertinent solutions to them.

The answer, then, to the second major hypothesis, was also a direct "yes." The teachings were relevant, they contributed toward
solving the problems facing the prophets, and they aided directly in fulfilling the purposes for which the book was written.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

As mentioned in chapter two when presenting a review of literature on this subject, very little has been written touching directly on the effectiveness or relevance of Book of Mormon prophets, particularly in relation to both their personalities and teachings. Further research in this area would hopefully contribute toward leading the modern world to realize the value of the Book of Mormon.

The initial planning for this project provided for treating more than thirty of the prophets in the Book of Mormon—alike those who emphasized at least one doctrine or teaching. As the accumulated evidence towered higher and higher, the fact became apparent that demonstrating the major hypotheses to be either true or false could be done with far fewer prophets. The four major ones chosen represented four significant eras, and contributed a large proportion of the present Book of Mormon. A recommendation which might be fruitful for some further research would be that some of the minor prophets in the Book of Mormon be considered along the same basic lines outlined in this study. If it could be shown that they were effective, and their teachings were relevant—even though much less evidence is available in the Book of Mormon regarding them—the conclusions drawn in this study would be reinforced.

A second area perhaps worthy of investigation would be a
delineation of the major religious problems of the world since 1830, the year in which the Book of Mormon was published, with a correlation of the relevancy of the doctrines of the Book of Mormon in terms of contributing toward the solution of those problems. This area could be rather large, but might be subdivided into several studies.

One final recommendation would be that the methods used in this project be adapted to a study of the personality and teachings of Joseph Smith and his successors as President of the Church, or even for a consideration of some of the Biblical prophets about whose life and teachings enough material is available. This project was a grand experience; further research in this same area should be very stimulating to others.
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APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

CONTEMPORARY WRITINGS PERTAINING TO THE
MINISTRY OF FOUR PROPHETS

LEHI

1 Nephi 1:4-15; 18-20; 2:1-10, 14-15; 3:2-6, 8; 5:1-19; 7:1-2, 22;
8:1-38; 10:2-16; 16:9-17, 20, 24-27, 32; 17:12-14; 18:5-8,
17-18.

2 Nephi 1:1 to 3:25; 4:3-12.

Jacob 2:27-34.

NPHI

1 Nephi 1:1-3, 16-17, 20; 2:11-13, 16-24; 3:1, 7, 9-31; 4:1-38;
5:20-22; 6:1-6, 7:3-21; 9:1-6; 10:1, 15-22; 11:1 to 15:36;

25:1 to 33:15.

Jacob 1:1-12.

Alma 3:14-17.

ALMA


Alma 1:1 to 3:5; 3:20-25; 4:1 to 8:6; 8:8 to 9:33; 12:1 to 13:30;
14:1 to 17:1; 27:16, 19-20, 25; 29:1-17; 30:1-6, 12-59; 31:1
to 33:23; 35:1 to 43:1; 45:1-19.

MORMON

I. His Own Time and Ministry

Mormon chapters 1 to 7.
Moroni chapters 7, 8, 9.

II. Editorials and Comments

Words of Mormon 1-9, 11.

24:19, 26-27, 30; 25:9-12; 27:18; 28:7-14; 30:7-11, 60; 43:45-47;

III. Abridging Details

27:16; 35:13, 16; 43:2-3; 44:24; 45:18-19; 46:38, 41; 47:1;
49:3; 51:10; 53:5, 10; 63:8, 17.
Helaman 14:1; 16:25.
4 Nephi 21, 23, 49.

IV. Book Headings

First Nephi; Second Nephi; Jacob; Alma; Helaman; Third Nephi; Fourth
Nephi.

V. Section and Chapter Superscriptions

Mosiah 9; 23.
Alma 5; 7; 9; 17; 21; 36; 38; 39; 45.
Helaman 7; 13.
Third Nephi 11.
Table 7
Teachings Emphasized by Lehi to His Contemporaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching number (first use)</th>
<th>Teachings emphasized (number used earlier)</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Origin (quote, paraphrase, or history)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>belief in God</td>
<td>1 Nephi 1:8-9</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jerusalem to be destroyed; Babylonian captivity</td>
<td>1 Nephi 1:13, 19</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>redemption by coming Messiah</td>
<td>1 Nephi 1:14-15, 19</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>endure in obedience to Lord's command</td>
<td>1 Nephi 2:9-10</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>obedience brings blessing</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:5, 6, 8</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>merciful deliverance and a promised land provided</td>
<td>1 Nephi 5:4-5</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>gratitude to God</td>
<td>1 Nephi 5:9</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lehi a descendant of Joseph</td>
<td>1 Nephi 5:14-16</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>plates of brass preserved for Lehi's posterity</td>
<td>1 Nephi 5:17-19</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>salvation for righteous Nephites</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:3, 14-16, 33</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>warning against evil; plea to keep commandments</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:4, 17-18, 35-38</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>fruit of tree of life brings joy</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:10-12, 15</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>depths of hell destroy men</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:13-14, 32</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>gospel leads safely to tree of life</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:19-20, 24, 30</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>devil's temptations lead many from tree of life</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:21-23</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>concern for world leads many from tree of life</td>
<td>1 Nephi 8:24-28, 31, 33-34</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Babylonian captivity, return</td>
<td>1 Nephi 10:2-3</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
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<td>3Messiah redeems fallen world</td>
<td>1 Nephi 10:4=6</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>prophet to prepare for Messiah</td>
<td>1 Nephi 10:7-10</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Israel, Gentiles likened to olive trees</td>
<td>1 Nephi 10:12-14</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lord would sweeten meat without fire, leading them to promised land if they obeyed; they would know it had been by His power</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:12-14</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>6merciful deliverance and a promised land</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:1-3, 4</td>
<td>quote and paraphrase</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>righteousness brings liberty; iniquity brings curse, captivity</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:5-12</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>promised land: covenant of inheritance to righteous</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:5-12</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>11plea to awake from evil, put on righteousness</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:13-14, 16-19, 21-23</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Lehi redeemed eternally</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:15</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>obey and prosper; disobey and be cut off from Lord</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:20</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>testimony of Nephi's calling</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:24-27</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lehi's first blessing on those who obey Nephi</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:28-29</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Zoram blessed: inheritance by righteousness</td>
<td>2 Nephi 1:30-32</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>afflictions are for man's gain</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:1-3</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>redemption comes by entering presence of the Lord</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:3-4</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Messiah redeems from Fall, meets demands of law</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:4-7, 26</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Messiah brings resurrection, judgment</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:8-10</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>opposition is necessary in all things</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:10-13</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>God gave man his agency on earth</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:14-16</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>devil seeks to make men miserable like himself</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:17-18, 27</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>the Fall of Adam and Eve</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:18-20</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>Fall of Adam necessary to people the earth</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:19-20, 22-23, 25</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>life is probation time to repent</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:21</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>Fall of Adam was necessary that men might have joy</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:22-25</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td></td>
<td>redemption makes men free, to choose eternal life or death</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:26-27</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
<td>Teachings emphasized (number used earlier)</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>choose eternal life (as Lehi did) and not death</td>
<td>2 Nephi 2:28-30</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>promised land: covenant of inheritance to Joseph's seed</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:2-3</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>righteous branch to be broken off from Joseph of Egypt</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:4-5</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>choice seer to bring word of God to seed of Joseph of Egypt</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:6-9, 11, 13-16, 18-19</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Moses and choice seer to have many similarities</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:10-12, 17-18</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>unified mission of Bible and Book of Mormon</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:11-12</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>simple words of Book of Mormon to convert seed of Joseph of Egypt</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:19-21</td>
<td>quote</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>latter-day prophet among seed of Joseph, son of Lehi</td>
<td>2 Nephi 3:23-24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Lehi's blessing: Lamanite curse to return upon their parents--Laman, Lemuel, etc.</td>
<td>2 Nephi 4:3, 5-7, 8-9</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Obey and prosper; disobey and be cut off from Lord</td>
<td>2 Nephi 4:4</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>promised land: covenant of inheritance to Sam's seed, who are to be joined with Nephi</td>
<td>2 Nephi 4:11</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>chastity command; one wife unless commanded otherwise</td>
<td>Jacob 2:27-31</td>
<td>quote (evidently)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>whoredoms: men cursed who bring sorrow to their wives</td>
<td>Jacob 2:31-33</td>
<td>quote (evidently)</td>
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</table>
### APPENDIX C

#### Table 8

Teachings Emphasized by Nephi to His Contemporaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching number (first use)</th>
<th>Teachings emphasized (number used earlier)</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Origin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lord gave Nephi a witness of Lehi's words</td>
<td>1 Nephi 2:16-17</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nephi to receive land of promise; prosper, if faithful; and be a ruler and teacher over his brethren</td>
<td>1 Nephi 2:19-20, 22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>rebellious Lamanites to be cut off from Lord</td>
<td>1 Nephi 2:21, 23-24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lord gives no commandments without preparing way to succeed</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:7</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>be faithful in keeping the commandments of God</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:15-16, 21</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lehi obeyed command to flee Jerusalem, lest he perish like the wicked</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:17-18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>plates of brass needed to preserve language, and knowledge of words of the prophets</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:19-20</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nephi chosen to rule over his brethren because of their iniquities</td>
<td>1 Nephi 3:29</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>be faithful in keeping commandments, for Lord can deliver man</td>
<td>1 Nephi 4:1, 3</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Moses led Israelites through Red Sea, escaped from Pharaoh by Lord's deliverance</td>
<td>1 Nephi 4:2-3</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Holy Spirit commanded Nephi to slay Laban</td>
<td>1 Nephi 4:10-12</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lord slays wicked for His purposes; better that wicked perish than that righteous perish in unbelief</td>
<td>1 Nephi 4:13</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Lord delivered Laban, plates, to Nephi that Nephi's seed might have law, obey it, and prosper</td>
<td>1 Nephi 4:14-17</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel were hard-hearted, forgot visit of angel and Lord's deliverance from Laban</td>
<td>1 Nephi 7:8-11</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lord can do all things for men by their faith</td>
<td>1 Nephi 7:12</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>by faith they could obtain land of promise and know of destruction of Jerusalem, or return and perish with wicked</td>
<td>1 Nephi 7:13-15</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel did not inquire of God because of hard hearts</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:3-4</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>destruction of Nephites would unavoidably come to pass because of wickedness of men</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:4-5</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>inquire of Lord in faith, not hardhearted, but keep commandments, and He reveals things to man</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:8, 10-11</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>house of Israel compared to olive tree, with Lehi's colony a branch broken therefrom</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:12</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lehi's seed to hear gospel from Gentiles, know they are of Israel, and be grafted back in as a natural branch</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:13-17</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lehi's teachings pertained to entire house of Israel and their covenants, which the Jews rejected but Gentiles accepted</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:17-18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>the tree Lehi saw represented the tree of life</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:21-22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>the rod of iron Lehi saw was the word of God, a protection against temptations</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:23-24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>the river of water Lehi saw was hell, a filthy gulf separating wicked from saints and the tree of life</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:26-29, 36</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>justice of God, like a flaming fire, also divided wicked from righteous</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:30, 36</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>God's judgment relates to deeds done in temporal body, casting wicked and filthy into hell; heaven is not unclean</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:31-34</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>hell prepared for filthy; justice finally consigns men to dwell with God or devil</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:35</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>fruit of tree of life is precious; greatest gift of God</td>
<td>1 Nephi 15:36</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Nephi's teachings justified righteous, cut the wicked; Laman and Lemuel would not murmur if righteous</td>
<td>1 Nephi 16:1-3</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Nephi's exhortation humbled brothers, which brought joy and hope to Nephi</td>
<td>1 Nephi 16:4-5</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Laman taught that Nephi sought authority over them by lies and cunning arts</td>
<td>1 Nephi 16:37-38</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel murmured about building ship; claimed Nephi was a fool and Lehi had led them into sufferings, that Jerusalem was righteous, and they could have been happy there</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:17-22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Lord led Israel out of Egypt because they hearkened to the Lord then</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:23-24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lord gave Moses great powers (divide waters, provide manna, smite rock for water) to lead Israel from Egypt</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:24-29</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Israel rebelled against God and Moses, hardening their hearts, and were destroyed</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:30-31</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Lord drove out Canaanites, gave land to Israel, because Canaanites were wicked, Israelites were righteous</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:32-35</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Lord loves and favors the righteous, giving them lands, and destroying the wicked</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:35, 37-38, 40</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Lord has power over earth—to create, change, or destroy it</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:36, 39, quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>because of covenant with fathers, Lord brought Israel out of Egypt; but He had to chasten them with fiery serpents</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:40-41 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Israelites hardened hearts, but were finally led to land of promise</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:41-42 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Israelites at that day soon to be destroyed for wickedness</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:43 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel were murderers at heart, swift to do iniquity, slow to remember the Lord or His angels</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:44-45 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Nephi's pain came from fearing Laman and Lemuel would be cast off forever</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:47 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>God would smite Laman and Lemuel if they sought to touch Nephi to kill him</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:48 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>if God commanded, Nephi could turn water to earth, or build a ship</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:50-51 quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Laman and Lemuel should worship God, honor parents; then their days would be long in land Lord would give them</td>
<td>1 Nephi 17:55 quote</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>nothing but power of God could soften hearts of rebels, by threat of death at sea</td>
<td>1 Nephi 18:15, 20</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Nephi's afflictions did not cause him to murmur, but to turn to Lord and praise Him</td>
<td>1 Nephi 18:16</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Lehi colony, a branch broken off from Israel, should liken words of Isaiah to themselves that they also might have hope</td>
<td>1 Nephi 19:24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>teachings of Isaiah, manifest to Isaiah through the Spirit, pertain to things both spiritual and temporal, things which shall come upon men according to the flesh</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:1-3, 27</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>house of Israel soon to be scattered; most of tribes already led away to isles</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:3-5</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>prophesies of the Gentiles carrying house of Israel after Israel apostatized pertain to temporal things, to Lehi's descendants also</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:5-6</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>in latter days a mighty Gentile nation in this land to scatter Lehi's posterity, then do the work of the Lord in carrying them</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:7-8</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>work by Gentiles for Israel to be of worth to Gentiles also, for Lord will make Abrahamic covenant known to all nations</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:9-11</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Israel to be brought out of captivity, gathered to lands of inheritance, and know that the Lord is their Savior</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:12</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>great and abominable church, and nations which fight Israel, to war among themselves and fall into their own pit</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:13-14, 19</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Satan soon to have no more power over men, and wicked to be burned</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:15, 26</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>God to destroy wicked by fire, not suffer righteous to be destroyed</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:16-17, 22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>blood, fire, and vapor of smoke must come if people harden hearts against Holy One of Israel</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Christ is the prophet spoken of by Moses, to reject whom would cause men to be cut off from among the people</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:20-21</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>soon, all churches built up to get gain, popularity, power, and lusts of flesh---the kingdom of devil---to be brought low</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:23</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Holy One of Israel soon to reign, and gather in righteous to feed and protect those who repent</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:24-25, 26, 28</td>
<td>quote</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Nephi, Lehi, and plates of brass testify of the truth, that a man must be obedient to commandments of God to be saved</td>
<td>1 Nephi 22:30-31</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Nephi's people kept the law of Moses</td>
<td>2 Nephi 5:10</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Nephi taught his people to keep records by taking the records with him to new land, and by recording on them</td>
<td>2 Nephi 5:12, 29</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>military preparedness against the Lamanites, who hated Nephi and his people</td>
<td>2 Nephi 5:14</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Nephi taught industriousness to his people, encouraging wood and metal work</td>
<td>2 Nephi 5:15, 17</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Nephi taught temple building by building temple after manner of Solomon's temple, of fine workmanship but with fewer precious things</td>
<td>2 Nephi 5:16</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>the small plates to contain most precious things of preaching, revelation, and prophesying, for Christ's sake, and for sake of people</td>
<td>Jacob 1:2-4</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX D

## Table 9

Teachings Emphasized by Alma to His Contemporaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching number</th>
<th>Teachings emphasized</th>
<th>References</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>all men must be born again from carnal to righteous state, becoming redeemed children of God, to inherit kingdom of God</td>
<td>Mosiah 27:24-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alma was nearly cast off, but through sore repentance was redeemed from hell, was brought to the light</td>
<td>Mosiah 27:27-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Christ to manifest himself to all, and wicked must confess His judgment is just</td>
<td>Mosiah 27:30-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>pristcraft, if enforced by sword, would destroy Nephites</td>
<td>Alma 1:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nehor had to die, lest blood of Gideon come upon people for vengeance, and in obedience to law of Mosiah, which people acknowledged</td>
<td>Alma 1:13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alma's father, by the authority of God, established the Church in land of Mormon</td>
<td>Alma 5:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lord delivered people of Alma's father from king Noah, and from Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 5:4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>have you sufficiently remembered their captivity and their deliverance from hell?</td>
<td>Alma 5:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lord changed their hearts, broke bands of death and hell, and they sang redeeming love</td>
<td>Alma 5:7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>the people saved by faith on Abinadi's and Alma the Elder's words; a mighty change of heart came</td>
<td>Alma 5:10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>have you been spiritually born of God, with this faith and mighty change of heart?</td>
<td>Alma 5:14</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>can you look forward, with faith in Redeemer, to a blessed judgment, or to be guilty and try to lie in order to be saved?</td>
<td>Alma 5:15-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>can you look up to God at judgment, having His image engraven on your countenance?</td>
<td>Alma 5:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>can you think of being saved when subject to devil?</td>
<td>Alma 5:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>no man can be saved unless garments are washed white by blood of Redeemer</td>
<td>Alma 5:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>blood and filthiness will testify of guilt of the wicked</td>
<td>Alma 5:22-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>wicked cannot join Abraham and prophets in heaven, or God would be a liar; they become children of devil</td>
<td>Alma 5:24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>if you have felt change of heart, do you feel it now?</td>
<td>Alma 5:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>are you blameless, humble, and clean enough to die now?</td>
<td>Alma 5:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>are you stripped of pride, envy, mockery, and persecution of others? if not, you are not prepared for the kingdom of heaven soon to come</td>
<td>Alma 5:28-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lord invites all men to repent, come to Him, partake of tree of life, and be saved from fire</td>
<td>Alma 5:33-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>good shepherd calls, but strays who refuse to hearken become sheep of devil</td>
<td>Alma 5:36-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>whatsoever is good comes from God; evil comes from devil</td>
<td>Alma 5:40</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>evil works show a man to be devil's child; his wages are death as to righteousness</td>
<td>Alma 5:41-42</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Alma called of God to speak plainly, to testify of things to come as spoken by the fathers</td>
<td>Alma 5:43-44, 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Alma knew these things by fasting, prayer, and the Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Alma 5:45-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Jesus Christ to come, to take away sins of those who believe in Him</td>
<td>Alma 5:48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>repent, for kingdom of heaven and the Son of God are at hand</td>
<td>Alma 5:49-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down and cast into endless fire</td>
<td>Alma 5:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>will you persist in pride, vain riches, persecutions of humble saints, and ignoring the poor? if so, you will be cast into fire</td>
<td>Alma 5:53-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>separate yourselves from wicked, for their names to be blotted out of book of life</td>
<td>Alma 5:57-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>a shepherd saves his sheep from wolf; good shepherd commands that you not allow wolf to enter</td>
<td>Alma 5:59-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Alma commanded members to obey his words, invited nonmembers to repent, be baptized</td>
<td>Alma 5:61-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Alma desired greatly to speak to people at Gideon, hoping they were humble, not in such a dilemma as those as Zarahemla</td>
<td>Alma 7:1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Alma rejoiced that people at Zarahemla were again established in righteousness</td>
<td>Alma 7:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Alma hoped to have joy over Gideonites, with less sorrow than over Zarahemla</td>
<td>Alma 7:5</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Alma trusted they were not so wicked, but worshipped true God</td>
<td>Alma 7:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Redeemer to come (though perhaps not to Nephites during His mortality); therefore, repent and prepare for Him and His kingdom</td>
<td>Alma 7:7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Redeemer to be born of Mary at land of Jerusalem, conceived by power of Holy Ghost</td>
<td>Alma 7:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Son of God to take upon himself the pains, sins, and infirmities of world, break bands of death, and succor his people</td>
<td>Alma 7:11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>have faith, repent, be baptized and be born again, to be washed from sins, laying them aside, and enter kingdom of God</td>
<td>Alma 7:14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>those who do this, and keep commandments, shall have eternal life</td>
<td>Alma 7:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Alma perceived by Spirit that the people believed, were righteous; Alma rejoiced</td>
<td>Alma 7:17-19,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>God does not vary; His course is one eternal round</td>
<td>Alma 7:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>God does not dwell in unholy temples; the filthy to remain filthy</td>
<td>Alma 7:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>do your duty to God, being obedient to all commandments, and you will join the prophets in heaven</td>
<td>Alma 7:22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>may the peace of God rest upon the righteous according to their faith and good works</td>
<td>Alma 7:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Ammonihahites to repent, or Lord would destroy them, for they plotted against Nephite liberty</td>
<td>Alma 8:16-17, 25, 29</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>the people had forgotten Lehi's deliverance by Lord, and the Nephites' deliverance from Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 9:8-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>except they repent, they could not inherit kingdom of God, but would be destroyed</td>
<td>Alma 9:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>inasmuch as ye keep commandments, ye shall prosper in land; otherwise, be cut off from presence of Lord</td>
<td>Alma 9:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Lamanites were cut off from presence of Lord</td>
<td>Alma 9:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Lamanites to be more blessed than unrepentant Nephites; their days to be prolonged, receive gospel, whereas wicked Nephites to be destroyed by Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 9:15-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>having been highly favored, spiritually and physically, unrepentant Nephites to receive fewer blessings than Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 9:19-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>repent, for kingdom of heaven is nigh, or be destroyed</td>
<td>Alma 9:24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Son of God coming soon, to redeem those who had faith, had repented, and were baptized</td>
<td>Alma 9:26-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>repent, for the reward is nigh—salvation for righteous works, or damnation for evil</td>
<td>Alma 9:28, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Zeezrom's plan was plan of adversary, to deceive people, turn them against prophets, and subjugate people to devil</td>
<td>Alma 12:4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>mysteries of God revealed to righteous, but those who reject truth lose knowledge of mysteries and become captive to devil</td>
<td>Alma 12:9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>at judgment bar our words, works, and thoughts will condemn us if our hearts are hardened</td>
<td>Alma 12:12-14</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>at judgment, man must acknowledge that judgments are just, that God has all power to save</td>
<td>Alma 12:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>wicked to die second death, a spiritual death, being dead as to righteousness and subject to devil and torment as if no redemption had been made</td>
<td>Alma 12:16-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Adam fell, and all mankind became lost and fallen</td>
<td>Alma 12:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>if Adam had then eaten of tree of life, the plan of probation and redemption would have been void, with no resurrection</td>
<td>Alma 12:23-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>plan of redemption brings about resurrection and judgment</td>
<td>Alma 12:25, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>God made His plan known to men by angels, according to their faith and good works</td>
<td>Alma 12:28-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>God gave more commandments, and the penalty for evil is the second death</td>
<td>Alma 12:31-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>those who repent receive mercy through Jesus Christ; unrepentant not to enter Lord's rest but to be destroyed</td>
<td>Alma 12:33-37</td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>God ordained priests to teach gospel, and the coming of Christ</td>
<td>Alma 13:1-2, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>priests were called to office from foundation of world, having proven themselves righteous before, and now receiving their office</td>
<td>Alma 13:3-5, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>priesthood is eternal, after order of Son of God, and priests receive the eternal priesthood</td>
<td>Alma 13:6-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>priests received priesthood because they repented, did righteous works, and were sanctified from sin</td>
<td>Alma 13:10-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>you should humble yourselves as did Melchizedek's people, including Abraham</td>
<td>Alma 13:13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>the ordinances are after order of Son of God, leading to remission of sins and His rest</td>
<td>Alma 13:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Melchizedek, a great prince of peace, had faith, brought his people to repentance</td>
<td>Alma 13:17-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>if you wrest the scriptures it will be to your destruction</td>
<td>Alma 13:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>repent, for day of salvation is at hand, as plainly declared by angels and prophets</td>
<td>Alma 13:21-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>soon the angels to declare Christ's coming</td>
<td>Alma 13:25-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>exhortation to obey his words, have faith, repent</td>
<td>Alma 13:27-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Alma labored for his own support, received wages according to work done as chief judge</td>
<td>Alma 30:32-33</td>
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<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>labor in Church done only for joy of seeing others rejoice</td>
<td>Alma 30:34</td>
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<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>all things testify that there is a God</td>
<td>Alma 30:39-41, 44</td>
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<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>devil carries evil men about to destroy men</td>
<td>Alma 30:42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>it was better that Korihor die, from asking a sign, than that the people be led to destruction by him</td>
<td>Alma 30:46-47</td>
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<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Korihor to be struck dumb for a sign, that he might not lead more people astray</td>
<td>Alma 30:49-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>the wicked prayers and other wickedness of Zoramites caused Alma grief</td>
<td>Alma 31:26-31</td>
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<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Alma prayed for spiritual comfort, patience, strength, and success for himself and fellow missionaries to the Zoramites</td>
<td>Alma 31:32-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>humility brings blessings and wisdom, so it was good that the poor people were compelled to be humble</td>
<td>Alma 32:8, 12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>more blessed are those who are humbled by word of God, repent, are baptized, and endure to end</td>
<td>Alma 32:13-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>those who know the will of God are cursed if they disobey, more than those who only believe</td>
<td>Alma 32:17-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>faith is not knowledge, but hope for true unseen things</td>
<td>Alma 32:21, 18, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>God is merciful to believers; He desires that we believe on His word</td>
<td>Alma 32:22</td>
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<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>God imparts his words by angels to men, women, and even children</td>
<td>Alma 32:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>some humble themselves regardless of circumstances</td>
<td>Alma 32:24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>exercising desire to believe can cause belief and faith to grow</td>
<td>Alma 32:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>growth of faith is compared to the growth of a seed: planting, detecting of growth, and knowing it is a good seed</td>
<td>Alma 32:28-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>a true seed of faith enlightens the understanding, enlarges the soul</td>
<td>Alma 32:28-29, 34-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>a good seed grows, but increased faith is not perfect knowledge, save only in the one thing experimented with; the faith is merely dormant</td>
<td>Alma 32:29-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>the seed (the word) must be nourished, for it will die if neglected or in barren ground</td>
<td>Alma 32:36-39</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>by diligence, faith, and patience with the tree of life it will yield the most precious fruit of all</td>
<td>Alma 32:40-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>men can worship God outside the synagogue; Zenos also taught this, regarding prayer and worship</td>
<td>Alma 3:2-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Zenos and Zenock testified of Son of God</td>
<td>Alma 33:12-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Moses also testified of Son of God, but people would not believe, were not healed by the type which was lifted up in wilderness</td>
<td>Alma 33:18-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>believe in the Son of God, His atonement resurrection, and judgment</td>
<td>Alma 33:21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>plant the seed of faith, nourish it, and it will provide eternal life</td>
<td>Alma 33:23</td>
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<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>keep the commandments and ye shall prosper</td>
<td>Alma 36:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>remember the captivity of fathers, and the Lord's deliverance</td>
<td>Alma 36:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>whoever puts trust in God will be supported in trials, and be lifted up at last day.</td>
<td>Alma 36:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Alma knew these things, not of himself, but by being born of God</td>
<td>Alma 36:4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>the story of Alma's conversion by the angel the pain of his remembered sins, and his cry to Jesus for repentance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>nothing so bitter as his pains; nothing so sweet as his joy at being redeemed</td>
<td>Alma 36:20-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Alma saw God sitting on his thorne, as Lehi had seen</td>
<td>Alma 36:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Alma's ceaseless labors to bring others to that Alma 36:24-26 same joy had been rewarded with rich success</td>
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<tr>
<td>113 (first use)</td>
<td>Lord delivered Alma in trials, just as He did people of Moses and people of Lehi; Alma always remembered this</td>
<td>Alma 36:27-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>keep commandments and prosper, or disobey and be cut off from presence of God</td>
<td>Alma 36:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Helaman commanded to take sacred objects, and to keep a record of the people</td>
<td>Alma 37:1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>plates of brass to be preserved, kept bright, handed down, to go forth to all nations</td>
<td>Alma 37:3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>by small means the Lord works his eternal purposes and saves souls</td>
<td>Alma 37:6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>plates had brought many to ways of Lord; Ammonites were one such group; perhaps many more yet to be converted thereby</td>
<td>Alma 37:8-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>plates preserved for wise purposes, all of which Alma did not know</td>
<td>Alma 37:11-12, 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>keep commandments and prosper; disobey and be cut off from presence of God</td>
<td>Alma 37:13, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>if Helaman kept commandments, Lord would preserve plates in his care; if he did not obey, he would lose plates, be delivered to Satan</td>
<td>Alma 37:15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>God could fulfill His promises, as He had done for the fathers, preserving the plates, and reclaiming many Lamanites</td>
<td>Alma 37:16-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>twenty-four gold plates to be kept to reveal secret wickedness of Jaredites</td>
<td>Alma 37:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Lord warned wicked Jaredites to repent or be destroyed; He prepared interpreters to reveal their wickedness to later nations</td>
<td>Alma 37:22-26</td>
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<td>123</td>
<td>general wickedness to be made known, but wicked oaths and covenants to be kept from people lest they become wicked, for curse on land would destroy the wicked just as it did the Jaredites, who murdered the prophets</td>
<td>Alma 37:27-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>teach people to abhor wickedness, to hate sin and iniquity</td>
<td>Alma 37:29, 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>teach people to have faith in Christ, repent, withstand temptation, not be weary of good works</td>
<td>Alma 37:33-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>learn wisdom in youth; learn to keep commandments of God</td>
<td>Alma 37:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>turn thoughts, prayers, affections, and actions toward Lord at all times</td>
<td>Alma 37:36-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>Lord prepared Liahona to work by faith, lead Lehi's colony in the way they should go</td>
<td>Alma 37:38-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>because of constant miracles the people forgot faith, tarried in wilderness and were afflicted</td>
<td>Alma 37:41-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>it is just as easy to follow word of Christ to heaven as it was to follow Liahona in desert</td>
<td>Alma 37:43-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>the way is prepared, an easy way: look to God and live</td>
<td>Alma 37:46-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>keep commandments and prosper; if not, be cast out of God's presence</td>
<td>Alma 38:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>endure to end in keeping commandments</td>
<td>Alma 38:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>Alma rejoiced that Shiblon was faithful on mission, even though stoned and in bonds</td>
<td>Alma 38:3-4</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>put trust in God, and be delivered out of trials, be lifted up at last day</td>
<td>Alma 38:5</td>
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<td>109</td>
<td>Alma knew these things from the Lord; his story of conversion by angel; his pains, and acceptance of Christ</td>
<td>Alma 38:6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>Christ is only way of salvation; He is light and life of world</td>
<td>Alma 38:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>Shiblon admonished to teach the word in humility without boastfulness, to use self-control, and to pray, but not as the Zoramites prayed</td>
<td>Alma 38:10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>Corianton had forsaken ministry, had transgressed by following Isabel, a harlot</td>
<td>Alma 39:1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>adultery the most abominable sin next to denying Holy Ghost, shedding innocent blood</td>
<td>Alma 39:5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>repenting of sins is good, for sins cannot be hidden from God</td>
<td>Alma 39:7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>repent, go not after lusts, cross yourself, or you cannot inherit kingdom of God</td>
<td>Alma 39:9, 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Corianton to counsel with older brothers</td>
<td>Alma 39:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Lord commanded Alma to correct his children, for people lost faith because of them; Alma commanded Corianton to refrain from iniquities, vanities</td>
<td>Alma 39:11-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>Christ coming to take away sins and declare glad tidings; Corianton's ministry was to teach this</td>
<td>Alma 39:15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>the coming of Christ as easy and necessary for angels to declare now as at time of His coming</td>
<td>Alma 39:17-19</td>
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<td>145</td>
<td>Christ brings to pass the resurrection after His coming</td>
<td>Alma 40:1-3</td>
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<td>146</td>
<td>God appoints a time for resurrection of each man, and a space of time between death and resurrection</td>
<td>Alma 40:4-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>between death and resurrection the spirits of men return to God, to a state of paradise, or to be cast into outer darkness</td>
<td>Alma 40:11-14, 21</td>
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<td>148</td>
<td>consignment to paradise might be termed a first resurrection, but is not the resurrection which reunites spirit with body</td>
<td>Alma 40:16-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>resurrection of righteous who lived down to coming of Christ, to occur before resurrection of those who lived after Christ's coming</td>
<td>Alma 40:18-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>resurrection brings about the restoration: spirit to body, the righteous to glory, and the wicked to death and bitterness</td>
<td>Alma 40:22-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>this restoration is according to justice of God, and the works and desires of each man</td>
<td>Alma 41:1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
<td>men judge themselves, whether good or evil</td>
<td>Alma 41:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
<td>decrees of God are unalterable; the way is prepared for men to walk to be saved</td>
<td>Alma 41:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
<td>Corianton admonished to sin no more, for wicked cannot be restored to happiness</td>
<td>Alma 41:9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>carnal man in a state contrary to happiness</td>
<td>Alma 41:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156</td>
<td>restoration means the good man receives good reward, evil man receives evil reward</td>
<td>Alma 41:12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>Corianton admonished to do good, for that which is sent out returns to sender, whether good or evil</td>
<td>Alma 41:14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>158</td>
<td>Adam, after his Fall, received probation time to repent; could not partake of fruit of tree of life, and became lost and fallen</td>
<td>Alma 42:2-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>man was cut off temporally and spiritually from Lord, but He reclaimed man from spiritual death first, using this probationary state</td>
<td>Alma 42:7-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>were it not for plan of redemption, men would be eternally miserable out of presence of Lord</td>
<td>Alma 42:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>repentance the only means possible to reclaim man, that mercy might claim him without destroying justice</td>
<td>Alma 42:12-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162</td>
<td>God himself performed atonement, that mercy and justice might be operative</td>
<td>Alma 42:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
<td>eternal law and punishment are necessary to have repentance and turn men from sin</td>
<td>Alma 42:16-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
<td>atonement brings mercy, the resurrection, and eternal judgment in presence of God</td>
<td>Alma 42:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>penitent are saved by mercy, but mercy does not rob justice</td>
<td>Alma 42:24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166</td>
<td>God brings about His purposes: men can choose evil or good, but must accept the reward restored to them</td>
<td>Alma 42:26-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
<td>Corianton admonished not to let doctrines trouble him, but only let his sins trouble him unto repentance</td>
<td>Alma 42:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td>Corianton should not deny justice, or excuse himself, but humble himself</td>
<td>Alma 42:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169</td>
<td>Corianton called to preach, bring souls to repentance, that mercy might claim them</td>
<td>Alma 42:31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>Nephites to dwindle in unbelief and wickedness in four hundred years from coming of Chirst, and become extinct from wars, pestilences, and famines</td>
<td>Alma 45:10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
<td>Teachings emphasized</td>
<td>References</td>
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<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td>remaining Nephites to become Lamanites, except for a few disciples, who will become extinct</td>
<td>Alma 45:13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172</td>
<td>the land cursed to the wicked, who will be destroyed when fully ripe, for God cannot allow sin</td>
<td>Alma 45:16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX D

### Table 10

Teachings Emphasized by Mormon to His Contemporaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching number (first use)</th>
<th>Teachings emphasized (number used earlier)</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Origin (quote, paraphrase, or history)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a peaceable walk and meekness lead to faith, hope, and the rest of the Lord</td>
<td>Moroni 7:3-4, 39</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>a good man produces good works; an evil man cannot do good</td>
<td>Moroni 7:5-6, 10-11</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>a gift, or a prayer, not with real intent, is counted evil</td>
<td>Moroni 7:6-10</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>all good is from God and Christ, always persuades men to be good, and leads to God and Christ; all evil is from devil, always entices to sin, denies Christ, and fights against God</td>
<td>Moroni 7:12-13, 14, 16-17, 22, 24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>do not incorrectly judge good and evil, for man will be judged with that same judgment</td>
<td>Moroni 7:14, 18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>the Spirit of Christ is given to every man as the light by which to judge good and evil</td>
<td>Moroni 7:15-16, 18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>by faith in Christ, and His light, men lay hold on every good thing and become children of Christ</td>
<td>Moroni 7:19-26, 28</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>God and angels foretold of Christ, that men might have faith in Him</td>
<td>Moroni 7:22-25</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching number (first use)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>if a man asks for good things with faith in Christ, it shall be done</td>
<td>Moroni 7:26, 33</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>miracles and angels did not cease after Christ's ascension</td>
<td>Moroni 7:27, 29-32</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Christ, on right hand of God, claims men with faith in Him</td>
<td>Moroni 7:27-28</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>to fulfill covenants of Father, angels minister to men of faith, who then testify and build faith in others</td>
<td>Moroni 7:30-32</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>salvation comes by faith in Christ, repentance, and baptism</td>
<td>Moroni 7:34, 38</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>the day of miracles, angels, and the Holy Ghost's power ceases only when faith ceases among men</td>
<td>Moroni 7:35-38</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>faith precedes, and is necessary for hope in resurrection and eternal life</td>
<td>Moroni 7:40-42</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>meekness, lowliness, and charity lead to acceptance by God</td>
<td>Moroni 7:43-44</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>charity, the pure love of Christ, never fails, but, as the greatest, embraces many virtues</td>
<td>Moroni 7:45-47</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>pray for charity, the gift bestowed upon followers of Christ to make them like Him</td>
<td>Moroni 7:47-48</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mormon urged his people to fight for wives, children, houses, and homes</td>
<td>Mormon 2:23-24</td>
<td>paraphrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>little children are alive, whole, in Christ; Adam's curse, and circumcision, done away by Christ</td>
<td>Moroni 8:8, 12, 19, 22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>little children are not capable of sin or repentance</td>
<td>Moroni 8:8, 11, 19, 22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>teaching or practicing infant baptism is wicked, solemn mockery of God</td>
<td>Moroni 8:9, 15, 19, 23</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>teach repentance, baptism, and child-like humility to parents, who are accountable</td>
<td>Moroni 8:10-11, 24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>faith, repentance, baptism lead to remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost, with His gifts</td>
<td>Moroni 8:11, 25, 26</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>God is not partial, but saves all children without baptism</td>
<td>Moroni 8:12-13, 15, 17-18</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>baptizers of infants will perish in hell unless they repent</td>
<td>Moroni 8:14, 16, 21</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>infant baptism denies the mercies of God and the atonement</td>
<td>Moroni 8:19, 20, 23</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Christ redeems those who are without the law; baptism avails them nothing</td>
<td>Moroni 8:22, 24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Mormon feared that pride, and loss of Holy Ghost, would soon destroy Nephites if they did not repent</td>
<td>Moroni 8:27-29</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>he feared Nephites had lost Spirit, would be destroyed if they did not repent</td>
<td>Moroni 9:3-4, 22</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>cease not to labor with people, lest we be under condemnation ourselves</td>
<td>Moroni 9:4, 6</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>people who delight in blood and abomination will receive judgments of God</td>
<td>Moroni 9:11-15, 23</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Nephites are more depraved than Lamanites, delight in everything not good, are without principle</td>
<td>Moroni 9:18-20</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Mormon prayed that Moroni might be spared as a witness of destruction or repentance, and to write a few words to future generations</td>
<td>Moroni 9:22, 24</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Moroni was counseled to be faithful in Chirst, that His teachings and grace would lift him up</td>
<td>Moroni 9:25-26</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>the Lord has spared you [the Nephites] to repent and be baptized, build up Church, that He may finally spare you</td>
<td>Mormon 3:2-3</td>
<td>quote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FOUR BOOK OF
MORMON PROPHETS AND THEIR TEACHINGS

David Earl Perry
Department of Ancient Scripture
Ph.D. Degree, April 1974

ABSTRACT

This study sought answers to two major questions regarding the Book of Mormon prophets: first, did a prophet's unique personality cause him to be significantly qualified and effective in coping with the problems of his ministry; and second, were a prophet's teachings directly relevant to his problems, assisting him to be effective in fulfilling his assignments. Six minor hypotheses were used to gather data regarding the four representative prophets chosen: Lehi, Nephi, Alma the Younger, and Mormon. The teachings studied were limited to those which reached the ears of a prophet's contemporaries, and were further limited to those which were clearly emphasized in at least one verse. The minor hypotheses yielded abundant and clear evidence showing that in all but one problem (one in Lehi's life) the prophets were qualified and effective in meeting their problems. The evidence also demonstrated that all of the teachings which were studied were directly relevant and supportive in solving the given problems.